The opening of Heauen gates,

Or, Wm Eaglesfield Thes 8 68

THE READY WAY to euerlasting life.

Deliuered in a most familiar Dialogue, betweene *Reason* and *Religion*, touching *Predestination*, *Gods word* and *Mans Free-will*, to the vnderstanding of the weakest Capacitie, and confirming of the more strong.

The fifth Edition.

By ARTHVR DENT, Preacher of the word of GOD at *South-Shoobery* in *Essex*.

LONDON,
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The Epiſtle to the Reader.

THis Diuine Worke (courteous Reader) though the Author left vnprinted; yet it coming to his hands that wiſht a continuance to the memory of the famous Writer, and a comfort to the ſoule of the deſirous Reader, hee thought good to bring it to the Preſſe: and therather

ther ſeeing that the points here in handled (being in themſelues very difficult, and heretofore not ſo plainely expreſſed) are here laid down that the meaner capacity may be inſtructed, and the skilfuller more confirmed. Here thou maiſt ſee *Reaſon* contending with *Religion*, and *Religion* reſoluing thoſe doubts which to *Reaſon* ſeem diſſoluable: here thou ſhalt know, though *Reaſon* tell thee, if God haue predeſtinated his elect, yet *Religion* wil tel thee, except thou worke out thy ſaluation with feare and trembling, thou art none of Gods fore-choſen: If from

from hence *Reaſon* ſay vnto thee, thou haſt abſolute free-wil, yet *Religion* will tell thee that thy willing comes from God. In a word; heere Ignorance ſhal be taught by Truth, and *Atheiſme* confuted by *Religion.*

Then (curteous Reader) peruſe this worthy Worke (of the eminent Preacher Maiſter ARTHVR DENT) wherein thou ſhalt finde the readie Path-way to eternall life; through which if thou wilt ſoiourn, at the end thereof thou ſhalt finde Heauen-gates ſet wide open to receiue thee, and troupes of Angels ready to carry thee into *Abraham* his

his boſome, where thou ſhalt
reſt from thy labour, and
haue all teares wi-
ped from thy
eyes.

A FRVITFVLL Dialogue betweene Reason and Religion, touching *Gods Predestination, and mans* Free-will, &c.

Reason.

WHo made this world?

Relig. God of his owne singular mercy, for the loue that hee bare vnto mankinde.

Reas. Of what substance did God create it?

Relig. Truly of nothing, but by his onely word.

Reas. And is it euerlasting, or shall it once haue an end?

Relig. The Scripture doth testifie, that it shall bee destroyed with fire from heauen, at such time as the Lord hath appointed: Howeuer, we are informed by

common experience, that it is by nature subiect to dissolution.

Reas. I pray you, what are we to thinke of God, that wonderfull work-master?

Relig. We ought stedfastly to beléeue, that hee is Almightie, righteous in all things, and eternall.

That of nature he is indiuisible, and yet consisting of three distinct persons, the Father, the Sonne, and the holy Ghost. This God is called God of incomprehensible wisdome, according to which he hath most wisely fore-séene, and appointed all things. He is vnchangeable, alwaies one, neuer passionate: he is the Lord of reuenge, the God of iudgement, at whose breath the Mountaines doe shake: whose seat is the lofty Cherubins, whose foot-stole is the Earth; hee is a iealous God, striking Idolators, and such as derogate from his honour, with terrible plagues. He is a consuming fire, the King of Kings, the onely Lord of all worlds, the beginning, the end, and yet without beginning, and euerlasting: He is inuisible; though at one instant beholding all things, at whose beck the heauens are obedient, the clouds doe gather them-

themselues together, and the Earth doth quiuer and tremble: This God rebuketh the winds, calmeth the Seas, limiteth to euery starhis influence, course and name: This God formeth light and darknes, sendeth and calleth backe lightnings, thunders, tempests, fearefull Comets, blazing starres, and all other wonderfull impressions of the aire; This is the God that holdeth the huge earth in his hand, hanging like a Globe in the midst of the world, that foldeth the heauens like a scrowle, that sendeth the seasonable Spring-time, Summer and Harueſt, frost, cold, hunger, famine and pestilence: He it is, that by a certaine infused fertilitie, causeth Trees, Herbs, Flowers, and euery litle grasse to spront and spring, to the behalfe of all liuing creatures. So that neither Birds of the aire, Beasts of the field, nor the silly wormes of the earth do want sustenance: This is that prouident God, that containeth the swelling Sea within her bancks, that ordereth that maruelous enterchange of flowing & ebbing waters, that feedeth the Whales, and euery liuing thing dwelling in the deps: this is that searcher of secrets, whom no place doth exclude, whose

presence, no action, word, nor thought can escape. This is the good God, that created man according to his owne likenesse, made him Lord of the earth; And when he had plaied the rebell against him, that recomforted him being thrownе out of Paradise, with the promise of the seed of the woman: This God is hee that sent his people Israel remedy, when they were in thraldome in the land of Egypt, that parted the Red sea, and drowned their enemies; that did safe conduct them in the Wildernesse, that rained downe Manna, that defended Dauid from the force of Saul, that foiled the Giant, that saued Ionas in the bottome of the Sea, that deliuered Daniel out of the Lions den, Ieremy out of the dungeon, the three Children out of the hot consuming Ouen: Hee is that God that sent his welbeloued Sonne to abide the death, to redeeme man-kinde from the bondage of sinne, and from the iawes of Satan: Finally, this is that God, by whose power all things were made, and by whose only prouidence euery thing is effectually moued, ordered and brought to passe.

Reas. All praise therefore be vnto this God

God most mightie, most righteous, and holy, that on this tender wise hath loued vs vnworthie wretches, deseruing nothing but the rigour of his Iustice. Now I pray you declare what was the cause that moued God to create man, and to set him in the world?

Relig. That he should serue him, and glorifie him.

Rea. Which is the way to serue God, and to glorifie him aright?

Reli. To acknowledge him as he hath appointed by his Word. Rom. 1. 19.

Rea. Which call you the word of God?

Reli. The same which the Patriarchs, Prophets, and Apostles receiued by the holy Ghost, and committed to writing, which wee call at this day by the name of the old and new Testament. Ephes. 2. &c.

Rea. How should a man know, that those monuments left by the Patriarches, Prophets, and Apostles, came from God: or that they did euer leaue behinde them any such writings, as wee tearme the old and new Testament?

Reli. As touching the authority thereof, although the orderly disposition of the wisdome of God, the doctrin it selfe, amazing

nothing of earthlineſſe, the goodly agreement of all parts together among themſelues, the Maieſty of God ſhining forth in that homelineſſe of ſpeech, the laying together of the fore-ſayings of the Prophets, and the ſucceſſors of the ſame, and many other ſuch arguments, may compel the wicked ones to confeſſe, that God is the onely author of the Scripture; yet certainely by none other meane, than by the ſecret teſtimony of the holy ghoſt, are our hearts truly perſwaded, that it is ỳ word of God, for ſaith the Apoſtle, That which we preach is the word of faith: and in another place, The whole Scripture (ſaith he) is giuen by the inſpiration of God.

Rom. 10.8.

Reaſ. But what doe you ſay to thoſe fellowes that account the Scripture a deuiſed or poſitiue law, made for ciuill gouernment onely, and authoriſed by Antiquity, as if it were the diuine word of God, leſt man not being reſtrained of the headineſſe of his owne affections by ſome other terror than that of corporall puniſhment, ſhould not yeeld himſelfe vnto neceſſarie order?

Atheiſt.

Reli. For my part, I haue little to ſay to thoſe Monſters, neither by the grace of God, in any ſocietie, will I haue to doe

with

with them, but my prayer shall be, that the Lord will suddenly turne their hearts, or in his good time, pay them their iust deserts. Truely of this sort of men, I thank God, in all my daies, (although I haue heard of many) did I neuer know more than three, which if it had pleased the Lord, were to many by two & one: these three were naturall brethren, men maruelous politique in sundry sciences, and worldly wise, but loe the iudgements of God: the two younger were hanged, not many yeeres since, iustly condemned for high treason, and the third being the elder brother, was taken in aduultery, and with a knife stabbed in, and slaine by the hands of his owne wife: and so farre as I vnderstand, there is not one of the name left aliue. The foole (saith the Prophet) doth say in his heart, there is no God, & doubtles they which with their tongues do prophane his word, deny not the same thing, or at least that which is as euill; for besides, that betweene God and his word there is alwaies a mutuall relation, so as the one is not without the other, wee finde in the Scriptures, that God is the word: and for all those that are departed this life, in that

Three brothers.

Psal. 14. 1.

Ioh. 1. 1

mind, I leaue them to God (though without repentance, we say they could not be saued.) And as for those that be yet liuing I looke for nothing more assuredly, than to heare tell of their ruine, and so likewise I leaue them.

Papists. *Reas.* There is yet another sort, which doe not so broadly blaspheme God, as those incredulous wretches of whom wee haue spoken: But they affirme, yea, and that very boldly, that through the diuersitie of translations, the Scriptures are falsified in such wise that no certaintie is left for beliefe to rest vpon: this thing although with the graue and learned sort may happily not goe for payment, because they are able to iudge betwixt euery translation and his originall: yet are the meane sort shrewdly handled with that suggestion; for thus stretch they out that obiection.

An obiect. The Scriptures (say they) were deliuered by the Patriarchs, Prophets and Apostles, set downe in the Hebrew, and Greeke tongues, afterwards translated after diuers fashions by men: yea such men as were either ignorant of the truth, or partiall in their owne conceits; for doth not the disagreement of our English translations beare wit nesse

witnesse, and make the case plaine enough?

Reli. I know these wranglers some-
what too well, and doe perceiue the wil-
nesse, not of them (as I weene) but of Sa- Trim ob-
tan: These men, because they can no lon- iection.
ger with their Pope-holy righteousnesse
sit in the consciences of the godly, and
cause them to imbrace that whoredome of
the sea of Rome, would yet bee loth that
Satan should leese his interest, in those
that may be swayed by any swinge of rea-
son, to incline to their part: if those good
men would bee so good, as to shew forth
our errors, they should both be heard and
thanked. I remember well that I haue Answer.
often heard this obiection, but who were
ỹ obiectors? Truly a few silly men either
papists, or newters, of some little iudge-
ment more than horses, at whom the
wise doe laugh, and the godly hearted
spew. It is sufficient for our assurance,
that the Lord hath promised to be such a
patron and protector of his word, That it
shall not perish, when heauen & earth shall Mat. 24. 35.
be brought to nought; and that he will haue
no title added to it, or diminished from it.
Therefore let vs giue them ouer, and har-
ken to our Sauiour Christ, promising
that

Apoc.21. 18.19. Mat.16.16 Io.10.29. Act.16.31. Ro.10.13. Ioh.1.26. God.

that, Whosoeuer beleeueth shall be saued, is blessed, shall be pardoned of all his sins, and haue life euerlasting. And contrariwise threatning, that whosoeuer beleeueth not, shall neuer bee saued, but abide the euerlasting curse of God.

Reas. Well, let thus much suffice concerning the word of God. Now I pray you let vs returne to speake of God somewhat more: You say that the nature or essence that is common in the God-head among the persons of the Father, the Sonne, and holy Ghost, is one single substance, vnable to be seuered?

Reli. So I say in deed, for otherwise should it come to passe, that so many persons as there be, so many Gods should there be seuerally diuided: therefore these three persons vnited together, in nature are neuer separated, but distinguished, so as the Father, is the Father onely, the Sonne the Son onely, and the holy Ghost the holy Ghost onely.

Reas. As these three persons are but one God in God-head, so are they likewise of one euerlastingnesse or eternitie: and of one equality without degree?

Reli. Yea truely, saue that in order, the Father

Fathe is the first, being of none, but of himselfe alone: the Sonne is second, begotten of the Father: the holy Ghost is the third, by an vnspeakable manner proceeding of them both. Order.

Reas. Surely, so far as I can perceiue, this mystery is most wonderful and vnpossible to be conceiued by man?

Reli. Therefore full wisely hath hee taught vs to beleeue, and reuerence the secrets of God, that saith; *Fides non habet meritum, vbi ratio habet experimentum.*

Reas. Besides these, what other things are we to consider chiefly in God?

Reli. That he is exceeding iust in punishing the disobedient and wicked, and that he is exceeding mercifull to the godly, and such as loue him, for it is written, That vnto such the Lord is mercifull and gracious, slow to anger, aboundant in goodnes and truth, reseruing mercy for thousands, forgiuing iniquity and transgression. Mercy and Iustice. Exo.20.5. Exo.34.6.

Reas. But it seemeth by this order of his mercy and iustice, that some things doe come to passe, which God willeth not, otherwise should there need no punishment, and therein I cannot perceiue how his omnipotency is not impeached?

Reli.

Reli. Doubtleſſe he could not be God, if any thing ſhould happen, that he would not haue come to paſſe; whereof the Apoſtle was full warie in this ſaying, God bringeth all things to paſſe according to the counſell of his owne will.

Eph.1.11.

Rea. Yet can I not perceiue, how his Iuſtice and Mercie doe agree together.

Reli. Theſe two are reconciled, and well made manifeſt, in his Sonne. For after our firſt parent Adam, by the eternall decreement, had caſt himſelfe, and all his progenie, into the defilement of ſinne, God did raiſe him vp againe in this ſecond Adam, euen Ieſus Chriſt, for which cauſe he is called, The Lambe ſlaine from the beginning of the world.

Apo. 13.8.

Rea. VVhat meane you by that word ſinne?

Reli. I call any thing ſinne, that in thought, word, or deed, is committed contrarie to the law and will of God.

Mat.5.18.

Rea. And may a man ſay without ſinne, that ſinne is willed by God?

Reli. Surely God ought not to be called the author of ſinne; for how can iniquitie iſſue from that fountaine, where nothing is, ſaue onely the cleere water of

of righteousnesse? Notwithstanding, so farre am I from holding him a sinner, that reuerently doth ascribe all things to the prouidence of God, that I account him rather an ignorant and blasphemous sinner, that supposeth any thing to happen by fortune, or chance, as if God were ignorant or careless thereof.

Reas. Here I perceiue the naile is driuen to the head, therefore you had need goe discreetly to worke, lest God be disabled in any thing that is due to his omnipotency, or that more bee attributed to his power, than agreeth with his iustice. Verily this is the thing wherein I haue not onely long time longed to be instructed, but also beene greatly troubled in minde about the same: I pray you therefore what is the prouidence of God?

A meane to be obserued.

Religi. By this word Prouidence, is meant the incomprehensible fore-knowledge and wisdome, whereby from the farthest end of eternity, God did behold, appoint, and prouide, when, where, and wherefore, all things in Heauen and Earth should be: as also his vnmeasurable, and omnipotent power, by which he hath brought, bringeth, and will bring, all the

Prouidence what it is.

the same things in their seasons effectually to passe, according to his owne will and purpose.

Reas. But sith the Lord is righteous, and so farre off from willing sinne, that on the contrary part, he doth not onely forbid it, but also most grieuously punish it, how can we say that sinne doth attend vpon the ordinances of God?

Neither rash nor timorous.

Relig. Certainly my very soule doth feare, least by ouer much boldnesse, I should violate, or seeme to neglect that rule of reuerence, that in Gods behalfe is to be obserued: On the otherside, I would be loath, that by too much cowardize I should dishonor the truth: therefore as there want not testimonies of Scripture to warrant this doctrine, so I thinke it not vnmeet, that herein I follow that generall sentence of the Apostle, whereof we haue already spoken; namely, that Ephe. 1. 11. God bringeth all things to passe according to the counsell of his owne will: and least I may seeme to giue too much libertie to my owne interpretation, I will also incline to the doctrine of Saint Augustine, who saith to the very same effect, The will of God is the chiefe and principall

pall cause of all manner of actions and motions whatsoeuer, for there is nothing that proceedeth not from that vnsearchable wisdome and will of his. Of these two we gather, that if the will of God be the principall and originall cause of all things, that is to say, of all actions and motions: Either that sinne doth come to passe according to that soueraigne will of his, or else that sinne is nothing at all: that is to say, neither action nor motion; which absurdity by no meanes can bee granted: wherefore vnder these two Banners, though the first may animate a right cowardly souldier, I dare now more boldly shew thee a reason of mine owne, & this it is: By Angels and men did sin take possession of this world, as appeareth rightly in the declining of our first Parents, Adam and Eue. But neither Angels nor men were euer separated from the gouernment and subiection of their Lord and Maker. Ergo sinne doth possesse the world by the ordinance, that is to say, the will and appointment of GOD: This thing is witnessed by the Apostle, who saith, that no man shall resist the will of God. Moreouer, behold saith the Lord,

Aug. de trinitat. lib. 3.

All things are done by the will of God.

Argument.

Rom. 9. 19.

Lord, I haue created the Smith that bloweth the coales in the fire, and him that bringeth forth an instrument for his work.

Esay 54. I, I say, haue created the destroyer to destroy. Many such testimonies may be recited out of the word of God; But because the wicked will here take the bit in their teeth (accounting God the Au-

A restraint to the wicked. thour of sinne) and runne on headlong after their owne appetites, to all kinde of mischiefe, as though it were not merely vnlawfull: we must before we goe any further, seeke to abate their courage, and take away that buckler, where-under they will shield and defend their pretended innocency; Therefore, although by that Almighty eie of God, nothing doth passe in the whole world vnseene, and therefore not vnwilled: yet cannot God be called the Authour of euill, for saith the

Rom. 9. Apostle, There is no vnrighteousnesse with God.

But the corruption of the minde of the first man (saith Master Caluin) by which we are become sinners, came partly by the procurement of Sathan, partly by

Man not to be excused. the frailty of nature; which nature man did defile, by his owne voluntary and wilfull

wilfull fall, from whence we perceiue, (respecting the meane and second causes) that mankinde doth perish through his owne default: And in as much as no man sinneth vnwillingly, but of his owne accord for the most part, no man is vniustly punished by the hand of God; for why? that is the onely cause of sinne, that doth exclude all other causes besides it selfe: but God excludeth no mans will in his owne actions: Ergo, God is not the onely cause of sinne. If any man will obiect, that man is not the cause of his owne euill, in as much as God the soueraigne cause of causes doth prescribe the euent, and direct euery action to the appointed end: I answer out of the Maior of my former Argument: that is the onely cause of sinne, which excludeth all causes besides it selfe.

Man not to be excused.

Argument.

Obiection

Answer.

But man in the wicked actions of Idolatry, Murther, Adultery, Theft, and such other, neglecteth the Commandement of God, and so farre forth as in him lyeth, excludeth all causes, saue his owne wicked lust onely, Ergo: Man in that respect is the onely cause of sinne, and iustly deserueth the wrath and correction

reation of God, as witnesseth the Pro-
Ose 13. phet, saying, Thy destruction, O Israel,
commeth of thy selfe.

Angels & men. *Reas.* I haue heard thee say ere now, that Angels and men were created according to Gods owne likenesse, that is, of a sound and vpright disposition and will: which thing truly is very conuenient in the eye of reason; for if they had beene ordained euill by nature, or to that end that they should decline from that estate by the will of God, it should argue God to bee vnrighteous, at least in respect of that purpose of his.

Relig. Nay it is rather an inconuenience many waies which thou vttereſt, except the will of God were not worthy to be the rule of righteousnesse; but see what other absurdities doe arise out of this suggestion of thine, as this: God created Angels and Men in all points sound, not pretending that they should degenerate; neuertheleſſe, they are become euill, and haue peruerted that estate of integrity, Ergo they haue broken the will of God, and conueyed themselues out of his ordinance: as who should say, they are therefore exempted from all subiection of

Absurdities.

their

their Maker, because they haue bene stubborne against him. Againe, all men at this day are corrupt and euill. Ergo, all men that are now liuing, are without the compasse of the ordinance of GOD. These and many other such absurdities, doe follow necessarily of thine obiection.

Resp. Nay Sir, herein as I take it, you haue deceiued your selfe, with plausible surmises: for if the essentiall estate of man be considered apart, from his faulty qualitie, not onely *Adam* in the time of integritie was the subiect of God, but after his fall also, and in this case may the consequent proue, that the whole rout, or sort of wicked men, are comprehended within the ordinance of God. Neuertheless, the corruption of nature, and all the euill actions of men may simply be transferred to the will and malice of Satan, and the frailtie of the workers. Essentiall estate. Corruption.

Relig. Truly I must néeds confesse, that this shift procéedeth not altogether from simplicity: Notwithstanding if we bend our affection simply to accept of the same, we shall fall very fondly to consent,

Blasphemy of the Maniches.

with the blasphemous Maniches, which do oppose Satan against God; for yet againe how shall God be omnipotent, if any other successe of things fall out, than as doth best agrée with his good pleasure? nay then how shall we not take the holy Ghost napping with infinite leasinges,

Amos 3. 6. Lament. Ier. 3. 38.

which saith, There is no euill in the Citie which the Lord hath not done. Againe, Out of the mouth of the Lord proceedeth good and euill: he hath made all things for his owne sake, yea euen the wicked for an euill day, &c. Notwithstanding, if we allude to that will of God, which he hath reuealed vnto vs, according to which

Psal. 5. 4.

he is truly said to be God, That can in no wise will sin, but he shall forthwith be vnrighteous, so farre am I from not consenting thereunto, that on the contrary part I yéld the whole assent of my soule. But that wee may discourse of this matter more familiarly, we are especially to ob-

Two things to be obserued.

serue two things: the first whereof is this: How, or in what sort sin entred into the heart of man: the second, of what effect or power sin is against God; these two shall make it manifest enough, that Satan neuer hitherto did, neither shall any

any time, hereafter, ruffle out his part, either in this world, or elsewhere, without his patent or commission from the Lord.

As touching the first of these we agree according to the Scriptures, that Adam, in his estate of innocencie, in all the instrumentall parts of his bodie, had a proportionable resemblance, aswell in soule as minde, to the Image of God (I meane not in person, but in holinesse) so that he stood at that time in such high & heauenly perfection, that no tittle could bee added for his greater integrity: how be it wee are well assured, that God neuer did beautifie him with the ornament of constancie, whereby hee might haue obtained ablenesse and power to stand out in that estate. Now therefore is it manifest, that sinne, beginning at the same vnconstancie, to insinuate among the good parts of Adam, tooke not euen there his very originall as a thing happning, or comming by chance, for this onely reason, that God would not furnish him (as in truth there was no law to bind him) with constancy, as well as with other notable endowments, as in whom hee had foreordained, that the hie estate should be tickle, & but a

The first.

Note well.

changeable god. For how was it possi-
ble that any thing should intrude it selfe
into the worke of God, whereof he was
not onely most warie and heedfull, but of
power also to interrept any thing that
might offend him? For this cause doubt-
lesse it is said, That the people of Israel,
and the Gentiles did gather themselues to-
gether, against our Lord and Sauiour Iesus
Christ, to do whatsoeuer the hand & coun-
sell of God had appointed to be done from
euerlasting: in whom (saith the Apostle)
wee were predestinate before the founda-
tions of the world. Finally we finde that
before the instant of mans creation, much
more then before hee fell away from righ-
teousnesse, God hath planted in the gar-
den, a tree of the knowledge of good and
euill. In this truely can we perceiue non
other appearance of truth, but that Gods
vnchangeable purpose would haue him
to tast thereof, although he were forbid-
den: for why? had not this thing been pre-
stired by the decrement of God, why mad
he that tree of nature by it selfe contrari
to all the rest? why made he any differen
of good & euill at all? who without doub
could haue made as easily the things y h
would

Act.4.27. 28.

Eph.1.4.

would, as hee can easily doe the things that be done. Why made he any of the instruments whereby man was changed, namely, Satan, & the Serpent? Lo thou dost perceiue (I hope) day light at this little wicket.

As touching the second thing herein to be obserued, namely, of what power or efficacie sinne is against God, I say that albeit many fond and vntoward witted men, haue maintained in time past, two originall beginnings of things, ascribing to good things, GOD for the author, and to the euill things the Deuill, whom with his euill things, they deuillishly deemed more eternall than God and good things, and that, Mauger the might of God, the Deuill plaied all his vngracious pageants: yet considering, that euerie man but meanely instructed in the schoole of reason, is readie to spew at this blasphemie, I hope a few testimonies, from among many, may serue to suffice the godly: wee reade therefore in the history of that righteous man Iob, that Satan could not once touch his person, goods, nor cattell, before such time as the Lord had giuen him leaue. Likewise, the The second. Iob 1.17.

Mat. 8. 31. Diuels beſought our Sauiour Ieſus Chriſt ſaying: If thou caſt vs out, ſuffer vs to goe into the heard of ſwine. Moreouer if we ſhould hunt out by curious ſpeculation, the creation of Angels, the cauſe, manner, time & place of their fall (which little pertaineth to edification, but rather to feed their itching and fantaſticall eares that cannot content themſelues with the ſimplicity of faith) wee ſhould finde that Satan in his firſt eſtate, was the creature Note wel. of God, & therefore can haue but a power ſubiect in the execution of ſuch wickednesse, as he executeth.

Meane Cauſe. *Reaſ.* Be it as thou haſt ſaid, for it accordeth well with reaſon: But let vs come backe to the ſecond inſtrument or maine cauſe of *Adams* fall, namely, the Serpent, becauſe I would gladly vnderſtand, whether hee ſerued Satan as an inſtrument in that enterprize, or whether of his owne malice, he did helpe to delude the woman, knowing before hand the lamentable euent of tranſgreſſion.

Reli. Truely albeit the Serpent was moſt ſubtill of beaſts, before ſuch time as the gift was taken from him for his fault, and in that reſpect like enough to ma-

maligne the estate of man, if he were capable thereof; yet doe I perceiue no reason, that hee should haue any insight at all, into the calamity of transgression: Nor yet that he might any way be incensed by malicious pretence to bring mankinde into Apostacie: But this doth offer it selfe more meetly to mine opinion, that Satan, (as saith Master Calum in his exposition, vpon that part of Scripture) hauing then had no familiarity or communication with man, standing then in need of an instrument, did chuse out the subtill Serpent, because hee was the aptest, or most active for such an exploit, into whom for the better finishing thereof he conueyed himselfe, and so got accesse more fitly to the woman. The Serpent.

Reas. Well then, as for thine arguments of Gods diuine prouidence, truely I must needs confesse, that I find them in some respect so plausible, and marching with reason, that thou doest almost compell mee to yeeld vnto thee: yet for as much as God is therby brought in suspicion of euill, I draw backe and dare not frankly yeeld my consent: Therefore may it not be said that God doth appropriat all things which haue any in- Obiections against prouidēce.

instinct of nature, besides man, to his owne direction, and turne man ouer to his peculiar choice of well or ill doing, hauing reason and the word of God, as Lanternes to guide him aright?

Note well Reli. Verily, neither can I perceiue any reason that should moue the Lord to giue the law out of his owne hand, considering he was not ignorant how apt man was to abuse himselfe, and to encline to the euill part; Except God were well pleased, that man should runne headlong into that labyrinth of mischiefe, into which wee all are fallen, through his default: and then commeth all to one reckoning, for his will is also there. Notwithstanding, I wot well there bee certaine Free-willing Papists, Anabaptists, Pelagians, Celestines, and others, which doe stoutly maintaine, that man in his naturall power hath that validitie to climbe into the heauens: But our Sauiour Iesus Christ, reproueth all such, saying, No man can come to me, except the father that sent me draw him. Againe, You haue not chosen me (saith hee) but I haue Iob.15.16. chosen you, and ordained you, that ye goe and bring forth fruit. To which merit-

Free-will.

Io.6.44.

mongers

mongers, the Prophet saith: Their owne arme did not saue them, but the right hand of the Lord, and the light of his countenance, because hee did fauour them. Likewise, saith the Apostle: What hast thou that thou hast not receiued? if thou hast receiued it, why doest thou reioyce, as though thou hadst not receiued it? Moreouer, the steps of man, saith Salomon, are ruled by the Lord, the way of a man is not in himselfe, the Lord hath mercy on whom hee will haue mercy, and hardeneth whom hee will harden; it is not in the willer, nor in the runner, but in God that sheweth mercie: yee are saued by grace through faith, and not of your selues, it is the gift of God; wee are not of our selues able to think any thing as of our selues. Notwithstanding all these I say, and almost infinite numbers of such like, doe these deuout men, as though it were for the onely defence or safety of a Christian common-weale, violently and with whole thousands of bloudy combates and chalenges, like foolish bold Champions, maintaine the quarrell of mans free-will and power.

Psa.44.

1 Co.4.6.

Pr.20.24. Ier.10.23. Rom.9.18. Ver.16. Ephe.2.8

1 Cor.3.5.

And why? forsooth because they would

in

in no wise intangle God, or bring him in within the lists or compasse of euill; this deuotion of theirs, will not suffer them, to entertaine such testimonies of Scripture, as doe make mention of Gods predestination and prouidence, wherein they shew themselues more nice, or would bee accounted more holy, than the holy Ghost himselfe. Well, let it be that all their stirres and brawles doe issue forth of that fountaine of zeale, and not from the slaughter-house of infidelitie, and Paganisme, yet saith the Apostle: All this zeale is blindnesse and damnable, as not being seasoned with the Salt of knowledge: woe be to him (saith the Prophet) that forsakes God, to make flesh his right arme: Ye heare me not, saith our Sauiour Christ, because yee are not of God: Hereof it commeth, that the Lord doth complaine by the mouth of the Prophet saying, I haue nourished and brought vp children, but they haue rebelled against me; the Oxe knoweth his owner, and the Asse his masters crib, but Israel hath not knowne my waies.

Ro.10.2.

Ioh.8.17.

Esa.1.31.

But that we may the better bethinke vs, and not so negligently passe ouer that pure

pure and vnspotted, Romane Catholique zeale, it is necessary that we call backe the nature of mankinde to her first creation. And then if it be demanded, whether free-will were in mans nature at his first creation: I answer (and yet not I, but ỹ word of God) there was so; for I make no doubt if free-will be in God, then was there also free-will in man, who in that estate was the liuely likelinesse and Image of God: but if it be demanded whether in that nature were any free-will, to deliberate on the euill part, I deny it: for how could Adam debate vpon the thing that yet was not entred into the world, especially seeing with the whole assent of his mind and body he was disposed to obey the Commandement of God? Furthermore, behold I pray you the gallant zeale of these godly men: which will in no wise suffer the Scripture according to the wisdome of God, to transfer all the actions of men to the fore-knowledge of God, and yet they themselues will not only not cease with most hateful blasphemy, to proue him an outward consentor to all vngraciousnesse, but also more blasphemously goe about to attaint the very natur

No free-will in mans first nature vnto euill.

The Papists zeale.

ture of God of so much abhomination and wickednesse, as by that generall propagation, is descended from Adam into his progeny: here have I need to bestir me apace, for if I handle not the matter right nimbly, this bold challenge shall quickly bring more fists about mine eares than mine owne; but it is no matter, I feare not the quarrell, and therefore must I now make good, though I seeme to stand in briers up to the chin; or else cry creak like a daskard cravin, for I know defendants more then too many, that are ready to snatch up the glove before it come at the ground: let us yet againe returne to Adam, and with one or two blowes this fray shall be ended. This man, the Lord said, was created according to his owne likenesse, whom the Papists doe affirme, to have received free-will to those evils, by the prerogative of his first estate: but God therein is slandered, and that innocency of Adam belied; for yet againe I say, evill was not then in the world; and therefore I perceive not, how God did set before him fire and water, and commit the acceptance of either to his choise; but I finde that he said unto him; Thou shalt not taste of the tree, if

God slandered.

Gen. 3.

thou

hou doest, thou shalt die the death. See to
then; the will of God was alwaies righ-
teous, euen so was Adams freenesse, freely
righteous, according to the righteousnesse
of God, saue that it was changeable: but
if the defendant will not for shame say,
that sinfull appetite is righteousnesse, ei-
ther let him confesse that Adam had the
same appetite, that did carrie him from
his pure estate some where else, than im-
mediatly from the hand of God by crea-
tion: or else let him conclude against God,
that that vncleannesse of Adam came from
an vncleane worke-master: or at the least,
that Adam was neuer the Image of the
righteous God, and so consequently prone
God a lier, in that he did so call him. If all
this be to no purpose, I desire to be resol-
ued, how the Papist hath not done open
wrong to God, and wherein my assertion
is false. They say (perhaps ỹ which they
should not) that onely the nature of God,
I meane his righteousnesse, according to
which he created Adam, hath some respect
of euill, as also that there proceeded from
the hand of God a substance corrupted na-
turally inclinable to iniquity; but moreo-
uer, and most vntruly, that God by a Note
pliable

pliable indifferency and luke warme affe
ction, hath giuen his outward consent t
all the wickednesse of the world; if thi
were true, then shall we neuer haue ne
ded Iesus Christ to pay our debt, for n
remission needeth if a commission be onc
granted: but the word or commandemen
of God doth refraine vs from all manne
of euill, therefore may we stedfastly be
leeue, that God neuer gaue man free-wil
to commit euill.

Now sir, let the indifferent giue sen
tence, whether these men haue committe
high treason against God, or I haue ci
ted them to answer for themselues b
iust accusation: if it be found that I hau
done them iniury, I will not faile to seek
some way to make them so large amend
as my fault shall be adiudged to require
and so to appease their charitable anger:
if they be found to haue retained no mor
modestly or defende for the righteousnesse
of God than his own word, let their zeal
(a Gods name) be condemned as foolish
and that I may vse the words of the Apo
stle, who haue knowledge: and they at la
leaue off their free-will and meritorious
righteousnesse, and reuerently giue plac
ta

Zeale must be ordered by the word.

Rom. 10.2.

to the word of God, which is not ashamed thus boldly to plead in the behalfe of his omnipotency and prouidence, in ruling and disposing the actions of all things.

The Lord did harden the heart of *Pharaoh*; He sent an euill spirit to vex *Saul*; He hath appointed euill, and put a spirit of lying into the mouth of the Prophets; Hee causeth man to depart from his feare; He hath sent strong delusion, that lies might be beleeued; He raiseth vp the euill in the houses of his owne seruants; He doth make peace, and create euill; He giueth vp into a reprobate minde; He doth all the euill that is in the Cirie; He deceiueth the Prophets which be deceiued, stretcheth forth his hand vpon those Prophets that himselfe hath deceiued, and destroieth them from midst his people, and yet is alwaies all holy and righteous. Exod. 9. 12. 1 Sam. 16. 14. 1 King. 22. 23. Esa. 61. 17. to the 21. Esay 45. 7. Rom. 1. 28. Ezec. 14. 9.

Well, notwithstanding these, & whole thousands of such like, which crush in pieces the free-will of man, and most strongly vnder-prop the ordinance of God; yet may I not think thus to pack vp my pipes and be trudging, least I seeme to triumph before the victory, and to boast of a blast that shaketh no corne. Therefore, hauing

setled my selfe once againe to my defence, at length there alighteth this perilous stroke: What sirrah, saith master Aduersary, if you will so malapertly auouch that Adam had no frée-will, it shall come to passe, that in that action of falling he had no will at all, & so consequently, that God did vse some actuall constraint: which being granted, how (I pray you) could God punish him or his posterity, as being detected in the same fall? Forsoth I answer, that after such time as Adam had giuen eare to Satan, his heart began to swell, and waxe so big with Concupiscence, that he would néeds strike saile to his owne misfortune: yée see now I goe about nothing lesse than to rob and dispoile Adam of a will, that was frée vnto euill.

Obiection.

Answer.

But my purpose is, that Satan be accounted the mediate Author thereof: For surely it can in no wise be a sin to that will which was giuen him of God, except it were possible for God to haue a sinfull will also, to whose likenesse he was framed, as we haue already proued.

Nay, I say moreouer, that as the will of Adam before his fall was frée vnto righteousnesse, and to the seruice of God, euen

Mans free-will, is only free vnto euill.

euen so after he had giuen his consent vn-
to Satan, that his will, and consequently
the will of his Ofspring was alwaies
free vnto euill, and the seruice of sinne not
able of it selfe without the grace of God,
once to rise vp to behold the beauty of
righteousnesse, nor to thinke a good
thought; for it is written, After yee were Rom. 6.
the seruants of sinne, yee were free from
righteousnesse: All are gone out of the Psal. 14. 3.
way, they are all corrupt, there is none
good, no not one: The Lord saw that the Gen. 6. 5.
wickednesse of man was great in earth, and
all the imaginations of his heart and
thoughts were onely euill continually.

Here if the heat of mine Aduersaries
were so farre past, that they would pause
and breathe, I might take opportunity to
let fall this one feeble stroke. If Adam in
his righteous estate and high perfection,
had power to doe the will of God if he
would; and yet did fall through infirmity:
how shall the Papist (that of himselfe hath
not power to thinke one good thought) ful-
fill the whole Law, and deserue so boun-
tifully for himselfe, & such of his friends
as will friendly consider his paines? Alas The folly of the Papists.
poore soule, he had more need to stand hard

to his tackling, and to ply his stumps a-pace, or else I feare mee he will be taken tardy, with hypocrites and deceiuers of men.

Obiection. Well, all this while doe I heape hot coales vpon mine owne head; for hauing granted that the first mans fall did spring out of that bosome of infirmity, now must I prepare my selfe to beare off this counterbuffe: for, saith the Aduersary, now are ye taken like a desperate Cockerell of your Father Manicheus owne brood. For how could infirmity destroy the lineaments and good parts of man, and get the goale against all that vprightnesse wherewith God indued him?

Answer. I answer, it is true indeed: Ergo, what an absurdity ariseth out of free-will? Therefore if I had not transferred the whole interest of things ere now, to the Diuine prouidence of God, yet shall this obiection come too late.

Adams power. *Reas.* By the processe of this circumstance, I perceiue that *Adam* had once power to stand and obserue the Commandement of God, if he would; but in that he not onely would not, but also on the other side wilfully, and like a rebell did cast

down

downe himselfe, and his off-spring into base misfortune, from the top of felicitie; surely it is most wonderfull to me: wherof there yet ariseth this question, Why would he not?

Reli. Doubtlesse I cannot aduertise thee of a more forcible cause than the ordinance of God: but if thou wilt, we may yet speake more plainely.

Therefore, it fared with Adam in that estate, as now adayes it doth with many men, that will not haue great plentie of money in their coffers, because they cannot get it. So Adam would not continue in his integritie (for in truth he fell willingly) because hee could not resist the ordinance of his God: but lest we may seeme to wander without our lists, let our Sauiour Christ witnesse the truth in this case: Come yee blessed of my Father (saith hee) possesse the kingdome prepared for you before the foundation of the world; Againe, hee is called the Lambe slaine from the beginning of the world.

The cause why Adam fell.

Mat. 25.34.

Apoc. 13.8

Therefore let vs conclude, that if the Lambe were slaine from the beginning wherof we may not doubt, in as much as

the holy Ghoſt hath ſpoken it) e the kingdome of heauen (the ſame kingdome I meane that wee ſhall enioy through Ieſus Chriſt) were prepared for the children of God before the foundations of the world, that the fall of man was prepared in like manner: for the one cannot bee without the other.

Reaſ. Verily in this wonderfull ſecret alſo Reaſon doth vtterly faile me.

Reli. Anſwer thy ſelfe, it was not for nought that the Apoſtle himſelfe hauing waded in this matter, whoſe inſight was neither to be meaſured by reaſon, nor the art proſpective, was forced to caſt downe himſelfe in this humility: O the deepe riches both of the wiſdome & knowledge of God! how vnſearchable are his iudgements, and his waies paſt finding out? It ſhalbe the part therefore of all the children of God, though they faile to comprehend the ſecrets of his vnſearchable wiſdom, with the Apoſtle to beléeue, where humane wiſdome ceaſeth: and not to reiect the truth (which wee know by the Scripture) becauſe they are not able to deſcry it.

Rom. 11. 33.

Gods ſecrets to be beleeued.

Rea. Truly I haue not much to ſay againſt thee, notwithſtanding it ſeemeth yet that

be-

betweene Gods prouidence, & mans free-wil, the truth hangeth in doubtful ballance.

Reli. Wel, I grant it may ſeeme ſo vnto reaſon, I will therfore ſhew thee two reaſons, that ſhal conclude the matter. When God had ſet before him this wonderfull maſſe, out of which he formed heauen and earth, and all things that they both doe containe, we are to bethinke vs whether hee did behold man for whom he made the world, and were well aduiſed what euent ſhould follow him: if he were not, where is then ỳ foreknowledge appertaining to the wiſdome of God, whereof the Apoſtle ſaith, The foundation of the Lord is ſure & hath this ſeale, the Lord knoweth who are his? And in another place coupling to the ſame foreknowledge, his own will: whom, ſaith he, the Lord hath foreknowne, them alſo hath he predeſtinated that they might be like the image of his Son. If vnto God we grant this foreknowledge, which, without doubt, without great wickednes we cannot deny, becauſe we ſhould accuſe him of ignorance, and ſo in effect allow him for no God at all; then is the concluſion both true and eaſie, That albeit the the totall of mans demerits were in the

Two notable reaſons.

2 Tim. 2. 19.

Rom. 8. 29.

almighty eye of his perceiuing that man would apply himselfe to all kinde of misdemeanor, yet did he finde nothing that he did mislike, which he suffered to happen for he might haue staied his hand in time good enough as I suppose.

The second reason.

My second reason cleaueth so fast to the foreknowledge of God, that they may seeme cater Cousins, and somewhat nearer; Howbeit for as much as it will giue great light in the matter, as also because Reason may very well play her part therein, we will not neglect the same. Therefore this it is; Considering that the end is the first intent of euery agent or doer, in that wise men of this world, doe seldome take such a thing in hand without an especiall purpose what shall become thereof; which notwithstanding in respect of God are very blockes, and all their actions of vile regard: We are diligently to obserue, whether the same purpose ought much more to bee granted to the God of all wisedome in that notable action of mans creation: if it be granted (as granted it must bee) in as much as the Apostle doth warrant it, saying, In whom wee were chosen when we were predesti-

Wisemen of the world.

2 Tim. 1. 9. Eph. 1. 4 Rom 9. 11. 12.

nate

nate according to the purpose of him which worketh all things: I would faine learne of him Sophister, whether God hauing appointed our end sure and certaine, in his owne vnchangeable purpose, had forgotten the efficient causes of the same, or left them to the wilde hazard of the dice, or to the gentle courtesie of Ladie Fortune. If because wee seeme to carry the head in our owne hand (which neuer the lesse are for the most part restrained of those things wee would) hee will say that God had no purpose, when yet wee were not, what to doe with vs. What asse will not laugh, if hee shall confesse, that that purpose is inuiolable, seeing in all earthly causes the LORD worketh by meanes? who will not thinke him madde that shall exclude our thoughts, wordes and deeds, from working the end of Gods foreknowledge and purpose? Efficient causes.

Real. But if God in this sort be the worker of all things, it seemeth that all freedome of mans will is bereft, and truely this is euen as much as to deny man to be a reasonable creature.

Reli. Although I haue not detracted from the freedome of will, so much that thou Freedome of will.

thou haſt cauſe to gather that conſequent out of my wordes: yet for my better anſwer to this obiection, I will vſe the helpe of Saint Auguſtine, who ſaith; It is vndoubted that wee will, when wee will, and that we doe worke, when wee worke; but to bee able to will, and to bee able to worke, hee bringeth to paſſe in vs, of whom it is ſaid, God is hee, that worketh in vs, both to will, and to doe: againe the ſame Auſtine, Which of vs (ſaith he) dare auouch that mankinde was vtterly ſpoiled of free-will by the ſinne of the firſt man? Freedome periſhed indeed through ſinne, but it was that freedome wherewith man was created in Paradiſe, free to enioy full righteouſneſſe, and immortality: for the which the nature of man ſtandeth in need of grace, according as the Lord himſelfe doth teſtifie, ſaying: If the Son doe deliuer you, then ſhall you be free indeed, free I meane to liue well, and vprightly: for ſo farre is it off, that free-will did periſh altogether in ſinners, that by the ſame free-will men doe offend, eſpecially they that take pleaſure in ſin, and which being delighted with ſinne, doe with pleaſure greedily follow their owne luſts: thus much S. Auguſt.

Auguſt. de grat. & lib. Arbit. c. 16.

Auguſtine againſt Pelag. 2. Ep. 1. book cap. 1.

And now to conclude, if by that frédome of mans ſpill which thou ſaiſt is bereft by the doctrin of prouidence, thou meaneſt that man doth not euill willingly, and with a plaine conſent and tractableneſſe vnto Satan the Tempter; ſo farre am I from bereauing him of that will, that I affirme, his minde and will to be carried to euill things moſt willingly, according to the ſaying, After ſinne, man is free from righteouſneſſe. For the more certaintie let a man enter into himſelfe, and conſider whether it be compulſion, that doth cauſe him to ſinne, or his owne voluntary will; and I doubt not but he ſhall ſon perceiue the whole fault in his owne frée will: but if by fréneſſe, thou meane neuer ſo little an ableneſſe of mans own proper ſtrength to performe neuer ſo little good or euill: I willingly doe embrace thy obiection; namely, that man hath no frédome at all, vnder the warrant of all thoſe places of Scripture which I haue already cited to that effect, and many other ſuch: for who knoweth not, that if the Lord himſelfe, by his onely magnificent power ſhould not continually ſupport the world, that we ſhould anone bee made an hotchpotch,

Freedome granted.

Proofe.

Freedome denied.

and

e tumbled together into vtter confuſion? how then can we haue the face to ſay that we haue ability to doe this good thing, or that bad thing, be it neuer ſo little, as of our owne proper ſtrength?

Another kinde of freedome.

On the other ſide, if thou meane the Papiſts deliberating or chuſing free-will as being authoriſed by God to doe, or not to doe his owne commandement: who will not laugh at this folly? for how can there be free liberty giuen, and yet ſharpe reſtraint? Againe, as we haue already ſaid, thoſe free-willians ceaſe not to make the Lord of ſo groſſe and rude vnderſtanding, as if good and euill were all good in the eyes of God: but how can that brabbling be true, when the price of righteouſneſſe was faine to bee paid with the blood of Jeſus Chriſt? or how could he call for ſatisfaction, when as by a certaine careleſnes he had conſented to euill, except he were new-fangled according to the manner of men?

Note this well.

Laſt of all, if (I ſay) man were ſo much Lord of himſelfe, that hee had power to ſhape out his owne proper fortune, where is that purpoſe of God become, that wee ſpake of euen now? If God held that purpoſe,

pose, how can man dispose of himselfe? for there cannot be a setled determination, and purpose in God of man, and yet a peculiar power in man to appoint his owne end: if by any colour the purpose of God might be denied, which cannot be, for as much as it is written of the Children being not yet borne, which had done neither good nor euill, The elder shall serue the younger, that the purpose of God, which is according to election might remaine sure; then would all these inconueniences following, fall out against God.

Inconueniences following free-will.

1. First and chiefly, that he is careleſſe of man, whom in such sort he hath giuen vp to himselfe.

2. Secondly, that God is vaine & idle: for how can he be otherwise, that without any mediation or request, hath done such things as himselfe in no wise regardeth?

3. Thirdly, that the Scripture bearing witnesse of his tender loue and iealousie ouer his people, is false.

4. Fourthly, that he neuer sent Iesus Christ, to pay the ransome of our sinnes.

5. Fiftly, that he made not man for his glory, with that Angelicall difference from insensible creatures to serue him, but

but rather to obey his owne lust.

6. Sixtly, that God doth communicate with some fellow Partners, as Satan, Fortune, or man, in the gouernment of those creatures that be his owne.

7. Seuenthly, so far as I can perceiue we might from hence shew presidents of authority, that it is not vnlawfull for vs to liue carelesse of God altogether; for if God be carelesse of vs, by what meanes should he binde vs to so much duty and allegeance, as he hath commanded by his owne word? nay it should seeme that we might be carelesse of such a God as had in none other sort vouchsafed to prouide for our safety: but we know that all these are false, and therefore doe finde our selues most bound to serue our God in all thankfulnesse and dutifull obedience.

Workes fore-seene.

Now Sir, if master Aduersary will cast about, and come vpon me with this double blow, according to his custome, and say, God fore-knew indeed from euerlasting who were his, and according to the same fore-knowledge, determined of man as after his desert should require; and that answerable to the proportion of his good or euill, God did fore-see and purpose to

shape

shape out his rewards for him, like to the Taylor, that for sauing of cloth, cutteth after the scantling of his measure: I leaue the Apostle to doe my message in his eare, which otherwise may seeme to call him open lier, saying: The purpose of God doth remaine according to election, not of works, but of him that calleth: And again, That election is of grace, & not of works. Rom.9.11. 12. Rom.11.6.

On the other side, the ouer-sitting of flat contraries doth require, that the reprobates or off-casts should be reiected according to the iudgement of God, whom hee had prepared for his glory to destruction: for so doth the Apostle witnesse. Besides this also, very reason doth instruct vs, that as often as the Scripture maketh mention of the predestination of the chosen sort, so oft is the predestination of the reprobates confirmed: Now therefore to giue free-will his packing penny, we may boldly say; that if free-will be, Gods prouidence is not; if Gods prouidence is, let these testimonies suffice. He is with euery little bird that falleth on the ground; hee feedeth the Rauens, and prouideth for euery Fowle of the aire: he numbreth the hairs of our head, and suffereth not one haire to perish Rom.9.22. The reprobate predestinated. Prouidēce. Mat.10.29 Mat.6.26. Mat.10.30 Luk.21.18.

perish without his will; he disposeth the
Iob 14. 5. lots: he telleth our daies, numbreth our
moneths, and limiteth our bounds, which
we shall not passe, &c. To proue that free-
will is not, I cite none other witnesse
than S. Augustine, writing vpon the 2 Epi-
stle of Pelagius, Chap. 10. I can see nothing
Free-will confuted by *August.* (saith he) in the whole Scriptures giuen by
God in commandement to man, to proue
that man hath free-will, that may not bee
found, either to be giuen of Gods liberality,
or required to set forth the assistance of his
grace.

Resp. What thinke you then of the per-
mission or sufferance of God, whereby he
is said to suffer sinnes?

Relig. If in sufferance we obserue al-
waies this thing, that God worketh not
properly in the wicked, but doth leaue
them ouer to Satan, and their owne lusts,
and yet reserue his prouidence, that he
may not stand as an idle loker on, surely
we ought not to reiect it; but if any shall
goe about to set Gods sufferance and his
will at oddes, he will lose his labour, and
prouе himselfe a fole. Hereupon saith M.
M. Beza. Beza full well, in his booke of questions
and answers, If sufferance be matched a-

gainst

gainſt willingneſſe, firſt I ſay, it is falſe, and ſecondly vtterly againſt reaſon.

That it is falſe, is manifeſt by this, that if God ſuffer any thing to be done againſt his wil, then ſurely is he not God, that is to ſay, almighty: But if he be ſaid to ſuffer a thing, as though he were reſtleſſe, how farre are we from the opinion of Epicurus? It remaineth then, that loke what he ſuffereth to be done, he ſuffereth it willingly: herewith doth Saint Auguſtine agree, ſaying: If we ſuffer ſuch as are vnder our correction, to doe wickedly in our ſight: Wee muſt needes be thought accceſſaries to their wickedneſſe; but God doth premit ſinne to range without meaſure euen before his eies, wherein if he were not willing, ſurely hee would not ſuffer it in any wiſe, and yet is hee righteous notwithſtanding. Now therefore to ſtop the mouthes of cauillers, which in no ſenſe will away with this diſtinction of will and ſufferance, but anon doe giue ſentence by a neceſſary conſequent, that God is the author of ſinne, let vs ſee whether the Apoſtle doth ſo conclude: what (ſaith he) If God willing to ſhew his wrath, and to make his

August. againſt Iulian, l. 5. c. 3.

Rom. 9. 22.

power knowne, did ſuffer with long pa-
tience, the veſſels of wrath, prepared to
deſtruction: We ſee he made no conſci-
ence to binde or knit vp the will of God
and his ſufferance together, as by the cir-
cumſtance of the ſame Chapter moſt evi-
Wranglers dently appeareth: Ergo, they are all ca-
uillers that doe ſay that God ſuffereth
any thing that he hath not willed before
hand.

Reaſ. Thus haſt thou not only defen-
ded and very ſufficiently proued the pro-
uidence of God, but alſo as it were by the
haire of the head haled free-will of chu-
ſing, and all idle ſufferance out of doores
which in truth haue beene the proteſte
enemies to the ſame prouidence of ol
Gods will time: Now therefore I pray you declare
and pu- what ſort God doth will ſinne, and yet iuſ-
niſhment. ly puniſh it with that dreadfull deſtructio
of body and ſoule.

Relig. Thou knoweſt the will of Go
is only the rule of righteouſneſſe, fro
whence it is his good will and pleaſure t
Exod. 14. 4. be glorified; for ſo it is written of Pha
raoh: therefore doth he will, or ſuffer
iuſtly: and becauſe that commandemen
or law, whereby he limiteth the courſe

of righteousnesse, is not onely transgressed, but also no sparke of inclination found in man to performe the righteousnesse therein required, therefore doth the LORD most iustly punish sinne.

Reas. But this is no answer; for if so bee the Lord doth appoint man to sinne for his glory sake, and neuertheleſſe restraining the execution thereof, vse his rod or correction, shall it not be said that God is vnrighteous, in that he stretcheth forth his hand vpon Innocents?

Religion. Nay rather, hee that shall dusily goe about to knit the Lord vp in such a straight, that hee may not doe with his owne creatures, which he created for himselfe, what seemeth best vnto his wisdome, doth vndoubtedly commit double and vnspeakable abomination; for (saith the Prophet) Woe vnto him that will contend with his Maker, a brittle potsherd, of the out-cast potsherds of the earth: shall the clay say vnto the Potter, Why doest thou make mee thus? did thy hands faile thee in thy worke? Woe vnto him that saith to Pro. 16. 4. Esa. 45. 9.

his Father, what hast thou begotten? or to his mother, what hast thou brought forth? What though the Lord will haue mercy? and will harden whome he will harden? Is there vnrighteousnesse with God? God forbid, saith the Apostle. If this answer may not serue sufficiently, take this by the way which we haue already handled: The cause of sin is resiant: but the cause wherefore sinne doth become sinne, and so punishable, must be ascribed to the ordinance of God: now whosoeuer doth content himselfe with this, doth seeke a cause beyond the will of God. Yet we know that darkenesse doth seruice to the light, and sinne (so farre as it is willed or punished by God) doth illustrate the glory of God.

Reas. In what sort therefore may we say that wicked men doe the will of God?

Note this well.

Reli. If by the name of Will, ye meane that thing, that is pleasing in the sight of God, and conuey the word doe, to a right intent of obtaining, in this case truely the wicked sort, not onely doe not the will of God, but also wholely doe leade awaie themselues to the will of Satan: But if the word will be taken in that generall

signifi

signification, to wit, for that thing which the Lord hath willingly purposed to bring to passe, and refer the word doe, not to the intent and purpose of the doer, but to the euent and successe of the matter, it may in no case be doubted, but God doth execute his will by Sathan, and all the wicked company of men: As for example: it is said that the Chaldeans were appointed of God to punish the disobedient Israelites, therefore as farre as they wrought according to this appointment which was secret, and kept close from them, they did the will of God: but for as much as the Lord hath giuen no outward commandement, or token to them, whereby they might bethinke themselues, to doe the worke of God in that action, but did rather hearken to Southsaiers, and obey their owne cruelty or lust, they did not onely not the will of God, but also opposed themselues full butte against it: for the commandement saith, thou shalt loue thy neighbour as thy selfe: thou shalt commit no murther, The like we finde of Pharaoh, pursuing the people of God: of Ioseph; his brethren and many other.

Examples. Ezek. 22. 20, 21, .2.

Gen. 37. 19

Will to be taken two manner of waies.

Reas. I perceiue then the will of God is to be taken two manner of waies, to wit, either for that prouident and vnsearchable wisedome, not alwaies manifested to the world, by which all things are most measurably ordred according to the euerlasting purpose of God, in which since wee ought to detract nothing from the good pleasure of God, because he should not be omnipotent, if any small succesſe of things should fall out contrarie to the same, and also that Gods will is taken for that, which by word or commandement, hee hath opened vnto vs, the performance whereof is onely good and acceptable in the sight of God.

Reli. So it is.

Reas. But may wee not say that God commandeth sinne, seeing hee doth after a sort will it?

Sinne not commaded though willed.

Reli. God forbid: it is the most horrible of all blasphemies: neither is the consequence good, God willeth all things, therfore he alloweth all things: for he willeth many things, which hee doth suffer, not because simply he doth allow of them, but after a certaine manner: for so far as he suffreth so far doth he allow & will them: but so farre as hee hath respect to the Instruments

struments whose actions they are, so far doth he disallow and punish them.

Therefore although we doe faithfully hold, and beleeue according as wee are taught, in the Confession of Christian faith, that God the Father Almightie willeth all things, and by his power bringeth all things to passe, euen as hee willeth them, yet doth it not follow that hee is the author of sinne, delighted with iniquitie, or that Satan and men doing euill doe obey God in that they doe euill, or that they doe the will of God, in that they doe euill, and therefore are not to be blamed: for besides that wicked men doe the wil of God, that is to say, those things that are ordained from euerlasting, they for the most part doe their owne worke, that is to say, that which they haue a will in themselues and most greedie appetite to doe, as wee haue oftentimes said alreadie.

Reli. I perceiue your meaning, neuertheless that it is a strange purpose or wil whose effects are not appliable, and familiarly consenting thereunto; yet doe not the effects of Gods Ordinance meet well in that secret purpose of God: for why? Purpose & effects.

the secret ordinance comprehendeth all things without exception: and the Commandement doth as it were, countermand all euill, and simply allow of none saue good things onely: Therefore I would haue you, by some example, to make these things more capable, which yet doe rather seeme to make God contrary to himselfe than otherwise.

God like to a king.

Relig. I will therefore take the case to stand thus: a King consulting with himselfe, and purposing to declare his honour and authority, enacteth such lawes and statutes, as the best industry of his subiects shall not be able to obserue: pretending neuertheless, of his owne especiall grace, to bee fauourable, or mercifull to some, and vpon the remnant of transgressors, to execute Iustice: From this head spring, to wit, the honour of the King doe distill two streames, the one for his beloued subiects, to drinke at, and liue; the other for the maligniant, to drown themselues in: the courses of these two being made contrary in effect, as in respect of their property, by him that hath the Law in his hand, bee neuertheless made fast in the bosome of the fountaine

and

and doe meet together againe in one, in the vttermost point, to wit, the honor of a King; as a Bee going out empty, doth returne laden with honey to her Hiue: for as the King without lawes, had beene no King, nor his dignity discerned; so by his lawes, his honor is become two-fold as in punishing whom hee list, and in shewing mercy on whom he will; so that his mercy and iustice (if hee had had no lawes, or if his lawes had beene capable to all his people) that had neuer beene knowne, are two notable pillers of his kingdome to his onely honour, and the great dread and admiration of his subiects.

Assure thy selfe, that so it is in that wonderfull ordinance of the Almighty, whose purpose is not of election and reprobation, nor of any other successe of common things, which notwithstanding he ordereth as is said already; so much as of his owne glory, according to ỳ saying, For my glory I created, formed and made man. This thing the heauenly wisdome of God did perceiue might come to passe most conueniently by such a prescription as should enforce the like effects to Note. Es. 43. 4.

to the law aforesaid (though in the first man his iustice is very well defended) yet note, alwayes betweene the purpose going before the Law (which is the glory of God) and the effects of the Law (which are his mercy and iustice) is no repugnancie, but one pure and peaceable agreement, for the Law condemning all men in the purpose of God, doth shew forth his glory in the most liuely colours of mercy and iustice, according to his first intent.

No repugnancie in God.

A worldly obiection.

Reaſ. Why, shall wee say then, Man is not punished for his due desert, but for the glory of God? And who, I pray you, shall not account him mad, that will strike an horse being teathered, because he doth not feed at libertie?

Excuse taken from man.

Relig. May rather, who shall not account him more than twise beside himselfe, that doth resemble the image of God to a brute beast? Did not God giue vnto man vnderstanding, will, and ableneſſe to stand vpright, till such time as he wilfully forewent it, as wel as he gaue him a commandement? Besides this, although the horse vsing lawfully, as in respect of himselfe (hauing kinde, his naturall mistris for his warrant) the benefit of his teather,

so

firſt that all fault (if faults may be here re-
) yearſed) reſteth in the teatherer, and none
gon the teathered, either for feding, or not
by feeding: what of this? To whom had
hich God done iniurie, if he had tied him to
pug hat teather, that he were as inſenſible
gras a blocke? Is not he the true and onely
en in wner of all things? If he be, to whom is
y hie bound, that he may not vſe the benefit
erof his will without controlement? Shall
nt. he pot ſay to the Potter, why haſt thou
an i made me thus?

r th Thus doeſt thou ſée the falſhood of Di-
ſha lities, whereby the wily wranglers of
ke the world doe oftentimes proue them-
n no lues more doltiſh than dolts, meaſuring
the Almighty with earthly things, and
ac is wiſdome by their owne folly.

im Moreouer, I pray you, where is that
Do ine fellow that will not confeſſe himſelfe
nto ſinner: if he be a ſinner, why is he
ſe to aptions as though he were pure and vn-
ull potted? what wrong is offered vnto him
om if he be caſt into the bottome of hell? Let
the ne ſée the braue free-willian, ſtanding
im moſt vpon the pantables of ſupereroga-
ris ion, that is not glad rather to ride at this
per anchor, when he perceiueth the ſeas of
ſo death

No man hath wrõg at Gods hand.

Note this in the Papists.

death ready to close him (God is righteous, I am a wretched sinner, and were there no desert aboue mine, the torments of hell should be mine inheritance) that to affirme that by the liberty of debating on the ends of good and euill, he hath purchased heauen by his owne worthinesse.

Adam.

Reas. Well, I perceiue the mystery of the matter resteth in *Adam* our first parent, whose fault doth heape the iudgements of God vpon his posterity: but how can it stand with Gods iustice, to punish all men for one mans fault?

A cauill answered.

Reli. Verily and this exception elsi might haue some good colour, if any man being free of his owne fault, could proue the burthen of another mans to be cast on his shoulders: but alas, why should any man complaine of wrong knowing himselfe guilty of so many euills, as are couched in his owne nature? doth it not fare (saith M. Caluin) with such fellowes as with Theeues which being led to the gallowes, doe exclaime of the Iudges yes doubtlesse: but if they would consider how miserable the comfort is, that is borrowed of that poore reuenge, they would

occupie

occupie their heads about their owne de-
serts which doe make them before God
alwaies guilty of euill deseruing, more
than bodily death, and for the most part
to be iustly condemned of the world: and
not vse that malipartnesse, especially
finding therein no remedy. The conclu-
sion is this, and my aduice also, that
such as doe finde themselues grieued in
Adam, seeke henceforth to be well pleased
in Christ.

Reas. Surely I haue nothing to say a-
gainst thee, therefore I come yet backe to
that which thou hast partly answered: for
why? I cannot be satisfied in this wonder-
full mystery of Gods secret and reuealed
will, therefore I pray you to enlighten me
once againe with some example more fa-
miliar, than that other.

Reli. Fooles must be wonder and to no
purpose, that goeth about to be as wise
as God, and to vnderstand all the secrets
of his will, which (saith the Apostle) are
past finding out: but againe, take the case
to stand thus; the Lord that disposeth of
all things in their appointed seasons put-
teth the Partridge into the Parlins foot,
the pretty bird into the Fowlers snare,
setteth

An exam-
ple of gods
prouidēce.

ſetteth the Ore ſot vpon the ſilly wo?me
b?ingeth the ſwelling waters out of the
channels to the ſto?e-houſe of the po?
p?ouident Ant, the little fiſh into the ne
the Lambe to the ſlaughter-houſe, th
Lyon to the hunters hand, and man fe
his due deſert oftentimes to a ſharpe an
ſudden death: this God in his righteou
iudgement, hath p?e-o?dained my ſonn
to die amidſt the mercileſſe waues of th
Sea.

But fo? as much as nature, the enem
to true wiſdome, doth not ſuffer mæ t
yéld vp mine intereſt, to the o?dinan?e
God (which you may ſuppoſe, acco?din
to ſome extrao?dinarie manner is diſcle
ſed vnto me,) I ſay vnto him, Sonne a
ſure thy ſelfe that no action in this wo?l
ſhall diſcontinue my fauour and good wi
towards thee.

Againe, I make thee Lo?d of m
whole reuenues, vſe all that I haue
o? may p?ocure fo? thée; ſo that in con
ſideration hereof, thou wilt grant me
thy trne and faithfull alleageance in thi
onely point; depart not thy natiue coun
trey, and I crane no mo?e: fo? at what
time ſoeuer, thou ſhalt commit thy ſelfe
vnto

vnto Saile and Walke, thou dieſt the death, there is no remedie; thus ſtandeth thy owne ſafety, thus thy perill, thus my hearty requeſt, and thus I leaue thee.

Well, this my ſonne according to the manner of men, hauing a body at home, and a minde elſe-where, than where it ſhould bee, neither making conſcience of my great liberty, commandement, nor any other good deſert, nor yet reſpecting the danger of his owne perſon, like a man ledde away with nouelties, and the triall of ſtrange aduentures, rather than eſteeming an honeſt life, and the duty of a childe, committeth himſelfe to the ſafe conduct of Will, that idle and deſperate Loads-man, and at laſt after many tormoyles, is forced to fiſh in the deepe without his boat, like as before I had told him, ſhall not the man ſeeme to doe me iniurie, that ſhall reproue me for this fault of my ſonne, who euery way ſo well and fatherly intreated him as became me?

Thus much I compare with the Lord of heauen, who created man Lord of the whole earth, ſaue that he debarred him one

one tree in the middeſt of the garden. But if thou haply ſay, that all this is not to the purpoſe, becauſe in the affaires of this proceſſe, I haue concealed no ſecret, but imparted my whole purpoſe to my ſonne: well I grant, let vs now therefore proceed, euen here the caſe is altered; let it be granted alſo, that before I begat my ſonne, I ſaw the ſequell of this matter, howbeit ſith it concerned my will, I would not onely obſerue mine owne pleaſure in that behalfe, but alſo, giue my willing conſent to his fatall deſtiny.

I pray you in this caſe, who ſhall let mee to doe the thing that pleaſeth mee: what hath my ſonne to ſay againſt me, or if hee ſay, and repine neuer ſo much: is it not folly to kicke againſt the pricke? but if I in the eie of reaſon, may ſeeme ſomewhat faulty, or cruell in this action, yet note that which is moſt vnrighteous in man is alwaies moſt righteous in the Lord of heauen, with whom no Creature doth ſtand in comparifon. Moreouer, ſuppoſe that I ſee a blindman taking a direct courſe vnto a dangerous caue, and before his fall, I ſteppe vnto him

Another Example.

him and say, father beware, and turn thée backe, for euen here at hand is such a perill, as threatneth thy death: the man not onely blinde of body, but of minde lame also, not regarding my friendly admonition, tumbleth downe headlong, and doth breake his necke. Is it strange to sée him burnt, that will not come off the fire? but now to the matter, let it be granted, that I set him in that way, foreséeing his fall; shall he not therefore bee indited of his owne death?

Reason. Surely: but here canst thou not goe cleere away without touch, for hadst thou not set the blinde man in that way, he might right-well haue escaped that misfortune. The like may be said of thy sonne also.

Relig. Did I not tell thée, that no creature is to be compared with God? who if he should damne the whole world, setting the desert of Iesus Christ apart, were neuertheleſſe righteous: true it is, if I had neuer begotten my sonne, he had neuer béene drowned. But the cause standing vpright as I left it, canst thou shew any reason why I should not beget him, séeing it was my will? Euen so, if God had

had neuer made man, doubtleſſe it had
bene long ere man had ſinned: but in
thoſe things which wee know the Lord
hath iuſtly done for his owne glory ſake,
let vs be content, and leaue off theſe top-
iſh obiections of iffes and ands; for what
pretend we thereby, but to ſet the Lord
to ſchoole, and to take him forth a leſſon
of our owne mother wit? who (God
knoweth) hath much leſſe need thereof
than the ſea to borrow ſome ſmal ſtream
of water from poore Brookes, which the
Sunne hath dried vp.

Iffes and ands to be left.

Rea. Well then, conſidering that nothing
in the whole world commeth to paſſe
raſhly, or caſually, but according to the
will of God, that is to ſay, his ordinance:
may it be ſaid that God hath appointed
any thing that he miſliketh, whereupon he
doth take occaſion to miniſter iuſtice?

Reli. Doubtleſſe it muſt be granted
that whatſoeuer God hath appointed, he
appointed altogether willingly and with-
out miſliking, otherwiſe might he ſeem
variable or to be conſtrained to will the
things that he willeth: but ſtay thy ſelfe
herein appeareth the wonderfull wiſdom
of God: for thoſe things that in the

God appointed all things willingly.

ow

owne proper nature are naught, haue yet before him great respect of goodnesse; whereby it commeth to passe, that sinne exacting at the hand of God the due execution of iustice, in respect of his ordinance, is no sinne, but righteousnesse rather. Sinne hath a respect of goodnesse.

Rea. How proue you that?

Reli. Is it not proofe enough to proue that it concerneth his endlesse glory: if it bee, remember thy selfe what I haue said already thereof before; this directory in the margent, shall direct thee to the place. (A)

Moreouer we may proue it thus: God saueth his chosen by the death of his Sonne, for it is written in the Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians: But God should haue saued no man in his Sonne, if there had beene no sinne, but rather the Holy Ghost might haue told a lie; Ergo in respect of Gods ordinance it is iust that man is a sinner. Ephes. 1. 5.

Againe, it is greatly to the glory of God, that he sheweth mercy to sinners: but if sinne had not beene, man should haue needed no mercy: Ergo in respect of Gods glory, it is good that man is wicked:

finally, it is greatly to the glory of God, that he doth iustly punish sinne: but if there had bene no sinne at all, his iustice had bene vtterly vnknowne or obscured. Ergo, (in respect of Gods glory) it is necessary that sinne be in the world.

Resp. By this reckoning thou wilt make sinne no sinne.

Relig. Not before it ceaseth to offend God in the breach of his commandement. But I say, yea, and that well aduised, that in respect of the glory of God, it is good that sinne should be, and better than good (if better may be) as it is written in Exodus, I will harden *Pharao* his heart, and he shall follow after you, and I will be glorified in *Pharao*, and in all his hoast, and his Chariots and horsemen.

Ex. 14. 4. 17.

Ex. 9. 16.

Nevertheleſſe, I assure thee that sin of the owne nature is so monstrous, that it deserueth some name more odious than sin, because the defilements thereof haue in such wise bespotted the nature of man, that the sluces of heauen are opened thereby, and the iudgements of God daily powred downe vpon vs, which is well verified in that generall ouerflowing of the world.

Gen. 7. 20.

But if sinne be good in respect of God whose glory is wrought, and euill in respect of the workes, how commeth the difference? The difference of good and euill.

Reli. How oft shall I answer this question? Thou knowest, that mans originall nature was sound, whereof could come none but sound fruit; but after that nature was corrupted by wilfull disobedience, from thence must néeds spring the rotten rot of sinne: so that all the difference came by the will of man, and so consequently resteth in man, till such time as he is regenerated, being then by imputation cloathed with the righteousnesse of Christ.

Reas. But God himselfe, the soueraigne worke-master, is said to worke all things: *Ergo*, he worketh sinne. Obiection against the Apostle *Paul.*

Reli. If by the same worke of his, thou meane his Almighty power, that vpholdeth the world, and all things therein, without which nothing can containe it selfe, I grant that euill things are wrought by God, that is to say, mediately or by the same power, because no thought of wickednesse, much lesse any execrable action could burst out, if he would take

away that life and ſtrength that he lendeth men, which preſume to play the rebells againſt him: but if by the working of ſin, thou doſt ſuppoſe the hand of God to be immediately ſtretched forth, to performe any wicked action, or elſe that ſinne hapneth by his together-working with ſinfull inſtruments: firſt I denie the conſequence, for it is falſe: and ſecondly I condemne it for the moſt wicked of all blaſphemies: my reaſon is this, the name of ſinne cannot agrée with God, who is the ſoueraigne rwte of all righteouſneſſe: the nature of ſinne cannot once lay hold thereof, becauſe it is vnchangeable, neyet can the paine of ſin touch that thing that is not faultie, and yet of neceſſitie ſhould all theſe follow againſt God, laying his hand to iniquity.

Therefore I conclude thus, the name the nature, nor the paine of ſinne, are any thing accidentall to the nature of God but all theſe thrée are bred, foſtered, and found in the ſoule and fleſh of man: Ergo man is not the inſtrument ſo much as the cauſe of ſinne.

Reaſ. It ſeemeth therefore that the worke of the inſtrument, and the worke of God

Gods vsing the instrument, go not alwaies ioyntly together.

Religi. This doubtlesse is very true, for the worke that should alwaies be but one in the opened will of God, is often-times made twofold by the worker: yet God by his power working in al things, worketh alwaies well, and is glorified; and the instruments not regarding his commandements, but obeying their owne lusts, doe alwayes worke ill, and are iustly punished. The work of man oft times made double.

Reas. Yet of the contrary part I thinke, that the worke of God in the good, and the worke of the good by vertue of the Holy Spirit which worketh in them, are euer one. Workes euer single.

Religi. I grant it, for so farre doe they worke together, that God doth worke in them to will, and performe the good workes of the holy Ghost; and they for the assurance of their well working, doe guid themselues by the light of his word. So then maist thou perceiue that although by Satan, and the most wicked men, the iust decrées and counsels of God are executed, yet are they thereof for the most part ignorant, & because they obey

Examples of single & double workes.

themselues, not regarding the will of God, their workes are made double. Of this we haue spoken somewhat before by the example of Ioseph his brethren, Pharao, & the Chaldees punishing the disobedient Israelites: but that notable example of our sauiour Iesus Christ, doth yet make it more euident to our vnderstanding; Christ was the good instrument, out

Col. 2. 13.

of whom God wrought the pardon of our

Ma. 26. 28.

transgression, who before lay fast bound vnder sin. This instrument at all times, and in all things, shewed himselfe obedient to the will of his Father: wherby it is manifest, that he alwayes wrought well with him; but on the other side, what bloody-butchers were the Iewes, which in themselues did cause the worke of God to become double?

Christ being a pure innocent, without

1. Pet. 1. 19.

one spot of sinne, and such a one as neuer gaue offence did they crucifie, not regarding any thing that had beene told them by the Prophets.

Wherby neuertheless it came to passe, that God performing that thing by them,

Act. 4. 27. 28.

which before all worlds he had appointed to bee done, did exceeding mercifully and well

well; and they yelding to their owne tyranny, committed the most horrible murther that euer was.

Reas. Well then, to make an end of prouidence, tell me I pray you, whereto shall we ascribe the fall of the first man? I meane whether to Gods inforcing, or his forsaking? The fall of *Adam* came through Gods forsaking.

Reli. Doubtlesse his falling from God ought simply to be imputed to Gods forsaking: for if we say that GOD did inforce him by any compulsion, I cannot perceiue, but we burthen him with a maruailous vntruth, notwithstanding it is alwaies granted, that the same fall came by the necessity of Gods appoint- Mat. 25. 34
ment; but for as much as that necessity, tooke not away his owne willingnesse, it shall neuer excuse him. So that herein rightly appeareth the wonderfull wisdome of God, who deriuing his glory (determined of before) from the grossest of all faults, is neither the cause therof properly, nor doth suffer it to come to passe besides his ordinance. Hee allowed so much as came from himselfe, saying, Loe it is good: but now forsaking the good it became euill for want of God: and in the same The wisdome of God.

same forsaking God, suffered (yet willingly) corruption to creepe vnder his ordinance, in such wise into the nature of man, that his owne will became the cause of that euill act of eating that forbidden fruit.

Reas. But why did GOD forsake him being righteous in his owne sight?

Reli. Nay, rather would I haue thee shew some reason, that should moue God not to forsake him, whom hee knew most expedient to leaue.

Reas. Here againe dost thou allude to the glory of God, but if I might still follow the appetite of reason, I should demand why God with such præposterous meanes doth exact his glory at the hands of his poore creatures?

Reli. Truly thou maist, but I will take a day to answer thee, till such time as the Ro.9.18. Lord hath called me to sit in commission about the affaires of his sacred Counsell, yet if I say he will be glorified, because it is his owne will, what then? Is there M. Calvin in his booke of offences. any fault? But take the words of Master Caluin for thine answer in this case, who saith thus.

The first man fell because the Lord

did iudge it expedient; why he so iudged, is vnknowne to vs: Yet certaine he so iudged, for no other reason, but because he saw that therby the glory of his Name should most worthily be set forth. When thou hearest therefore mention made of the glory of God, there thinke of his righteousnesse, for it must be righteous that deserueth praise; and let vs rather beehold an euident cause of damnation, in the corrupt nature of mankinde, which is nearer to vs, than seeke for a hidden and vtterly incomprehensible cause thereof in the secret counsell of God, which is further from vs: and let it not grieue vs so far to submit our wit to the vnmeasurable wisdome of God, that it may yeeld in many secrets of his; for those things which is neither granted, nor lawfull to haue knowledge, ignorance is well learned, and the coueting of knowledge a meere kinde of madnesse.

Reas. VVell, let vs stay here, concerning the prouidence of God, from which I perceiue nothing can be excluded, and therefore in vaine doe men babble of Fortune, Chance, and other casuall goddesses; now therefore let vs proceed to the predestination

Predestination, what it is.

tion

tion of God, of which thou oft hast spo-
ken in this treatise of *Prouidence*, and fir
of all I would haue thee describe vnto me
what predestination is.

Religi. Truly the prouidence of God
considered in that generall signification
that is to say, in the foreknowing, order
ning, ordering, and ending all manner
things, so farre as yet I vnderstand, doth
comprehend the predestination of God
and is one selfe-same-thing therewith
yet because predestination may bee re-
strayned, in a more particular propri-
ty, namely GODS ordering and dis-
Ro.8.29 posing of mankinde, thus it may be de-
fined:

Predestination is the euerlasting, and
vnchangeable decree of the Almighty
which going before all causes, draweth
man to his appointed end, that is either
in Christ to saluation, or else in Adam to
condemnation, and the endlesse torments
of hell.

Reas. And what is election? not the
same thing?

Election what it is. Reli. No, for that is vtterly impossible,
and against all conueniency of reason, be-
cause the Reprobate is predestinate as
well

well as the Elect, as witnesseth Saint Jude: but we cannot say that the Reprobate or off-cast is elected: therefore Election is peculiar to the good, being chosen out of the totall number, and predestination common to the good, and the bad. Rom. 9. 22. Iud. 1. 4.

Reas. But it seemeth, that before election goeth the mercy of God, whereby the elect are saued: and then doth the nature of contraries require, that the hatred or wrath of God, should be the cause that he damned are damned: *Ergo*, God damneth some, not for their sinnes, but because he doth hate them? The mercy of God the cause of election

Reli. If to the word hatred, or wrath, thou hadst put this little word Iust, whereby God in Iustice might haue cast off the off-casts, who neuer doth vniustly) I would haue liked well of thy consequent. But I pray you where did you euer finde, that God hated man except it were for sinne? shew me the place and then will we conclude against him, that he hateth his owne worke: In the meane time content thy selfe with that which we haue already spoken, touching this matter. Sinne the cause of damnation.

Reas. Well, but it may seeme a hard and cruell

cruell case that some should be appointed to damnation, although God may iustly doe it for his glory sake.

Religi. I will not see thy folly in these two words, Cruell and yet Iust But yet I say it may seeme a case more harder, if God could be found in the fault of reprobation, whereof hee is but the failing cause, the efficient being grounded in man himselfe. And if wee may speake of the hardnesse of causes, it seemeth much more harder on Gods behalfe, that if he could be proued the cause of transgression (which is vtterly vnpossible) that yet he may not vse his pleasure with his owne creatures.

Cruelty & Iustice.

Reas. But what say you to these generall sentences, God would haue all men saued, God would haue all men come to repentance, that they might not perish?

1 Tim. 2. 4.
2 Pet. 3. 9.

Religi. You must construe of the word All, in that place, not after the letter: or else auouch to the face of GOD, that some are damned whether hee will or not; therefore (All) hath relation here to all sorts of men, in degree and calling, that is to say, Princes, Magistrates, Gentlemen, Bondmen, Artificers, and such

such other, aswell of the Iewes, as of the Gentiles: thus doubtlesse wee must expound the word All. For GOD forbid that the Doctrine of predestination, the very ground-worke of saluation, should hang in suspence for a few texts that pretend outwardly a kinde of repugnantie: if this will not suffice, then credit the Apostle saying, according to the whole course of Scripture: Though the children of Israel were as the sand of the sea, yet shall but a remnant bee saued. Many are called, but few are chosen, few enter at the straite gate. The word All. Rom. 9.27.

Reas. Truly, thou compellest me to yeeld vnto thee in this point, for if God would not haue some damned, they should in no wise be damned that be damned: But here againe ariseth a doubt which troubleth many: If that necessity of things be prefixed by the eternall decreement, it is superfluous, and a meere kinde of madnesse to teach what euery mans dutie is: for why? all the teaching, and preaching in the world, shall not alter the least lot of Gods determination. The vnreasonable obiection of worldlings.

Reli. Indéede this is the onely refuge whereto the Fore sieth, being hunted from

from enery other haunt: But the Lord will one day vnkennel him, when his cast and carkasse both shall pay tribute to the father of Fores, if meane whiles he offer not to God a more acceptable sacrifice.

These bee they that make shipwracke of all religion, although some-whiles vnder the veile thereof, they would seeme for credit sake, to haue some little smacke of the feare of God: But they which be the children of GOD, either know or will know, yea, and the wicked also shal know not onely that in that security which they would draw from hence, resteth the vt-ter contempt of Christ, and of all true knowledge of God: but also that doctrine is appointed as an vnder seruant to the Lord, whereby he doth iustly accomplish that which he had purposed touching his elect, as also the reprobate.

Doctrine vnder seruant.

Therfore I pray you what is the drift of this obiection other than that the Lord should leaue all things at large, according to the opinion of Epicure, and the Papist, to a careleste happening, whereby man for his behoofe, pausing vpon his owne wayes, might addresse himselfe, as of his owne proper power, to will and worke

those

those thinges, that should win Saluation: Truly if they were called together, among them all, is not one to be found, that can cleare himselfe of this intent.

Therefore it is manifest that they are not enemies alone to the predestination of GOD, according to whose foreknowledg a conuenable necessity of things is prescribed, as best beseemeth his omnipotency: but also that they are angry with free iustification, wherevpon they will either conuey themselues into the place of Christ, or at least become assistant in his office.

But why should the reprobate himselfe accompt doctrine vnnecessary, albeit hee will not yeeld himselfe obedient: is he not thereby left vtterly without excuse before the Lord? Doctrine leaueth the reprobate without excuse.

Moreouer it is commaunded to bee preached before the Reprobate, not because it might intercept that thinge that God hath purposed of him, but that by his incredulity, it should appeare and bee more manifest, how forceable the grace of secret election is: for wherein may the same more euidently bee perceiued then when in one selfe same Doctrine, The grace of secret election.

and in one selfe same calling, there should fall out amongst these men sundry or severall effects, one reverently to imbrace it, another stubbornly to scorne and reiect it, and the third sort, to stand in a luke warme and careleſſe quandary as if to embrace it, or not to embrace it, were all one thing. Againe, there is no doubt, as it pierceth the hearts of the chosen, and doth leade them as it were by the hand to conformity of life, whereby to their great comfort, they seale vp vnto their consciences their election: euen so it striketh the hearts of the wicked, and oftentimes doth restraine their malice partneſſe, albeit it proceede from the mouth of a man: last of all, if those vnreasonable Cauillers could be content to take any light at the hands of the godly, the Apoſtles should some perſwade them how necessary doctrine it is. They preached predestination, and the free election of God, notwithstanding they were well assured, that not only themselues, but all that were predestinate to life, were in no case remoueable from the estate of saluation.

The Apoſtles.

They knew also on the contrary part

that the Reprobates by no industry could inherit the kingdome of GOD; and albeit before their faces, whole thousands were caught with this lime-twigge of Sathan, and did tipple themselues with the drunkennesse of dinellish security: yet I say, were the Apostles neuer the colder, to walke in their duties and offices, but painefully, and with all diligent care and endeauour, to their continuall danger, and last with the losse of their liues discharged the meluesthereof.

Wise men of the world.

Reas. But wisemen of this world, doe plainely affirme, that the doctrine of predestination, ought not to be taught, or at least is not conuenient to be taught before common people, because they are not able to apprehend it.

Reli. But if wisemen of the world, were any thinge wise in the wisdome of GOD, this would be farre from their thoughtes, and twice so farre from their tongues, for I pray you what did moue the LORD to reueale the same Doctrine, so plentifully in his word? Some intent of secrecy? Shall the Sunne neuer shine because all are not able to compre-

hend it with their bodily eyes? Let the same wise man gape vpon the ground, for that is the treasury of their vnderstanding: they cannot perceiue how one litle graſſe groweth; and shall the earth therefore not yelde her increase, as the Lord doth appoint? If hidden and secret causes may lawfully preuent common profits, then shall it behooue vs to ware more sharp sighted than men, or shortly to haue another world.

Those men whatsoeuer they pretend, haue small regard of Gods true seruice or honour: therefore is there no cause that the truth of GOD should be dissembled for their number or authority, be it neuer so great.

Auguſtine his answer to the enemies of predeſtination. Chap. 15.

I remember that Saint Auguſtine hath said full well to the matter. This Doctrine being heard (saith he) some are turned into a sluggish heauinesse and slowenesse, and beeing readily bent to fall from labour vnto wantonnesse, do go after their lusts: must therfore that be thought false, which is said of the foreknowledge of God? And will we not also speake that which the Scripture being witnesse, it is lawfull to speake? By likelihood we are affraid

For proue that S. Augus

affraid least he should be offended which cannot take it, and are not affraid least we holding our tongues, that hee which can take the truth should bee deceiued with falshood. Therefore as true religion is to be taught, that GOD may bee truely worshipped, so is the Doctrine of Predestination, that hee which hath eares to heare of the grace of GOD, may glory in GOD, and not in himselfe.

Real. But haue the children of God any assurance in this world of their election?

Reli. Yea verily, for from whence commeth Repentance and the fruits thereof, but from Regeneration by the faith of Christ: but this faith is giuen to the elect onely: Ergo onely the elect do repent and giue themselues to obey the commandement of God, the rest haue not the will to thinke a good thought, much lesse to doe any good, & least of all to continue in well doing: for that is also a peculiar marke in election; Therefore let no man climbe vp to the cloudes, to search whether hee be enroled in the secret counsell of God, nor busie himselfe with many

Means for a man to know his election.

held y same creed as the

curious speculations below, but let him that would bee assured of saluation, enter into himselfe, and consider how his faith doth stand in Christ, in whose blood if hee finde it vnfaigned, thereupon let him rest, wrapping his whole body and soule vnder his promises.

Faith sufficeth to iustifie. Ioh.3.15.

This thing can no man truely bring to passe, except his name bee written in the booke of life.

Rea. What if a man feele not in himselfe these testimonies, should he therefore despaire of saluation?

Reli. GOD forbid: let such men rather bee sent to the word preached and Sacraments, whereby the grace of election may worke these testimonies in them: and no doubt, those whom the LORD hath foreknowne, in his good time he wil call home into his houshould of faith.

Ro.9.33.

For we know, as he hath predestinated of his owne vnspeakeable mercy, whom he would, so also hee calleth them at such seuerall seasons as he will: Some early, and some late, as it is written in the Gospell of the labourers that were called into

God calleth his children. Rom.8.30. Mat.20.2.

into the Vineyard. 3,4,5,6.

Rea. But by that Parable may wicked men take encouragement to neglect the time of calling, because they that were called in the last houre, were accepted and rewarded equally with those, which came in the first houre of the day.

Relig. Nay, let me shew which of those labourers being once called did refuse to come: it seemeth rather to me, that hereby they should learne without delay to turne vnto the Lord, hearing his voyce, for we must consider that he is not bound to vs but we vnto him; therefore the wisest counsell that I can giue, is that wee take heed betimes, and lay hold when he offereth himselfe, least our sins doe make separation betweene him and vs: for if through our negligence wee ouer-slippe the day of health, wee cannot recouer it afterwards, although wee seeke it with teares, which wee finde truly verified in the foolish Virgins, rich Glutton, and many other: therefore he that thinketh himselfe in most security, and saith my age is not yet fitte, who am but young, or my businesse is not past which is great, I will turne to the Lord at some better

No man ought to neglect the day of calling.

Mat. 25.13
Lu. 17. 24

leasure: let him remember that all flesh is as grasse of the field, and hath no charter for one minute of an hower, and if we be taken napping with sinners, our reward is with them, whereuppon it is full truly said:

Mat. 27.3. Lu.15.24.

To death we must stoop, be we hie, be we low,
But how or how sodainly, few be that know.

Reas. But yet must they needs be damned that are appoynted to damnation?

Reli. It is true, yet alwayes because they are sinners, and do not harken to the voyce of the Lord.

Reas. Truely in my iudgement, euen that is enough to stop any mans mouth, be he neuer so captious: but I pray you, is there no speciall strength in this doctrine whereby the children of God in the perilous time of temptation may comfort themselues, and wage battaile (as it were) against Sathan in the depth of his assaults?

Rel. Doubtles this either is, or ought to bee no question, for if wee consider that Sathan hath no power to plucke one haire from their head, much then the Lord shall

Mat. 10. 39.

shall appoint, and that all the wicked rout are holden in by the hand of God as by a bridle, that they can neither conceiue any mischéfe against them, or goe about it, when they haue conceiued it; or if they goe about it neuer so much, that they can bring nothing to passe, but that which hee doth command: what dastards are they that will shrinke one hayre breadth from such a simple enemye, hauing so mighty a God with so many Legions of Angells watching ouer them continually for their defence?

The comfort of predestination.

Ioh. 1. 11. 12.

Rea. But for all this, thou knoweſt that Gods deareſt children are often-times ouerſet with feare of his power, yea and peeuiſhly intreated thereby alſo.

Reli. It is granted, and truely, this may ſerue for a glaſſe for Gods deareſt children, to behold their wants in the faith of Chriſt, as also their corruption, holding them downe ſo faſt vnder ſinne, that when they are at the beſt, euen then are they not without deſert of Gods chaſtiſements.

The cauſe that Satan miſintreateth Gods children.

Reaſ. And what is the ſame faith, whoſe obiect is the Sonne of God crucified, the onely condition whereupon all the children

dren of God in their seasons are gathered vp into immortality?

Religion. It is so.

Reas. Ergo it is no matter if wee obey not the law of God: wherein wee learne to serue him, and to performe such actions of society as be requisite betwixt man and man.

Reli. This is but a fond starting hole, for as the mercy of God is not extended but through free election, not without the condition of faith included by God for the externe: so also is it prouided, that the same faith bee accompanied with righteous exercises. But concerning this matter and other mo, whereof I am to conferre with thee, I would wee might meet hereafter at more conuenient leasure.

Reas. I am well content: in the meane time I thanke you of your patience in this discourse, beseeching God that I may alwaies beare in minde the godly aduisements thereof.

By Arthvr Dent.

An earneſt perſwaſion to a *Worſhipfull Gentleman*, and his good friend, to continue conſtant in Chriſtian Religion, and to loathe and deteſt the ſlights of Superſtitious Papiſtry.

By the former Author, *Arthur Dent.*

ALthough the Wiſe, bee not ſo eaſily caught in the ginnes of the Spider, as the pure Fly, or being once intangled, is not ſo eaſily poyſoned: yet common experience, doth make it a plaine caſe, that oftentimes ſhe is ouerthrowne therein, and compelled to yeild her ſelfe a prey vnto tyranny. But conſidering how

how easily our affections be caried awe
by corruption, to wit, faultinesse, nat
rally to decline to the worse part: it s
meth most wonderfull to me, that ye
being so nére a neighbour to heresie, a
yet vndrowned in the dregges thereo
more than vntainted, to the danger
your ouerthrow yet to come: for why
are not the best subiect to change?
meane the wisest, to folly? and the he
est to wickednesse? Let the example
Salomon witnesse the truth in this cas
who although he were the only parragon
of the world, fell to idolatry, the most no
some of pestilences, and to all vncleann
nesse of body. Doth not likewise the e
ample of our first parent Adam, make
plaine, that our nature being at the bes
is euen then most subiect to take th
wickedest course? O wretched estate
what reckoning shall wee make of ou
selues, which seeming to stand, are eue
falling? which outwardly carrying th
countenance of security, haue at hom
such an enemie, as doth practise our con
tinuall estrangement with God! and
beesides this, are inuironed with a worl
of vngodly allurements. But yet amids
these

these dangers, O wise & mercifull God, whose grace superaboundeth sinne, whose mercy dispenseth with all our faults, and whose holy Spirit doth indue vs with wisdome, to discry the subtilties of Satan, with strength to stand against them, & with constancy, to continue in his loue, feare, and true worship. I appeale to your conscience, whether the Lord hath dealt with you lesse fatherly, than in old time he did with Daniel in the Lyons denne, with Ieremy in the miery dungeon, or with Ionas in the belly of the whale? they saw their daunger imminent, which did put them in minde to repaire to the Lord. But you, I know, yea I know it to well (if it pleased God it should be otherwise) haue continually laid before you the fairest baites of the world to betray you, where vnder lurketh the perill of perpetuall damnation, and yet, the Lord be praised, doe continue his true and faithfull seruants vnvanquished.

But to speake more plainly thus it is: by reason that the aduersaries to al truth, I meane the Papists, haue the colourable accesse vnto you of friendship, you are alwaies

alwaies endangered by their wily per
swasions to forsake your God. This tru
ly hath beene often told me, and I see n
reason why I should not beleeue it, con
sidering that I know how busily they vs
to buzze in euery dish, where opportunit
promiseth the insertion of their loath
some corruptions: But most chiefly, i
they be on a sure ground that their bodi
danger is not thereby threatned, the
are impudent to blaspheme God and his
holy Religion with all treasons of thei
owne wicked inuentions: which thing
although commonly and of custome, i
hath hapned vnto you by them, yet am I
to restraine my selfe to the answering o
one particular, and principal attempt tha
was made against you at your table, by
certaine Gentlemen not long since, whose
names though I partly know, yet I think
not conuenient at this time to deliuer to
common obloquie.

These Gentlemen grounding all
their Religion vpon hoary haires which
they call ambassadours of experience, and
vpon the graue visors of their Fathers,
which we account the wisest parts of
them, hauing preferred fancy before
faith,

faith, and their owne humour before the honour of God; brought all the battery of their reasons and arguments against the poore bulwarke of your only defence (being a man able to be seduced by the violence of perswasion, or at least to have béene driuen to silence that extreme refuge, had not God béene present with you in the rescue of his owne honour) saying, Was there not in those daies, wherein our religion flourished, a golden and plentifull world: was there not loue and Charity: vnity of Religion: the seruice of God established by Generall councels of holy doctors and fathers: how then should not those waies bee the best to serue GOD which they obserued, and haue left vnder the warrant of sufficient authoritie to the memory of our present age: How so many wise men béene deceiued, so many learned men liued in folly and ignorance: haue so many Kings and Emperors slept in blindnesse of heart and died in the darkenesse of heresy: nay, hath all Christendome wandred out of the way till now, &c. This thred-bare discourse (which they draw out to the whole length of a Cart rope) is able to be-

bewitch so many, as make reason their idoll, euen as themselues are bewitched by the wilinesse of the Diuell and their Pope: but let vs survay those waterlesse clouds, and we shall easily perceiue them as they be.

Haue not these wise men layd true religion in water and sacrificed their zeale to reason, as if she were some Goddesse? Peere is nothing but a plaine collection of reason, and carnall experiences, and shall wee make them the platformes of holinesse? is the wisedome of man of so forcible a capacity, and the word of God conuinced of so great debility, that in cases of religion wee shall ground vppon likelihood of mans imaginations? Let vs bee wise: the Elder hath most pith of all the trees in the wood, but least strength and goodnesse than any other: the thunder a huge clap, but a little stone; and these men great choyce of boastings, but small verity, or vertue in their words.

Must not that building needs be naught bee it neuer so faire, whose foundation is vtterly rotten: and must not that religion of necessity be worse, whose princi-

ples

ples God hath flatly forbidden: Hee calleth mans reason a trayterous enemie to GOD, saying, it neuer was nor shal be subiect to his law: they honour it, as the true penny of their whole trust: he condemneth the precepts of our forefathers, forbidding vs to pray for them, which doe imbrace the same, because they are sepulchers full of rotten bones, cloudes without water, and they themselues hypocrites, but they esteeme them noe lesse then loadesmen to all piety and life euerlasting.

Alas why doe wee feare their vnion in idolatry (for that is the vnity, that they reioyce in, and bragge of) more than we sorrow for the dishonour of our GOD: or why should we be troubled with the long and prosperous estate of Popish religion, more then bee comforted in the newes and glad tydings of the Gospell: Doth not the Apostle tell vs that before the dissolution of the world, there should befall a generall Apostacy, and departing from the faith of Christ, and that all this should happen by one man, namely the man of sin, and child of perdition: saying, that hee

2. Thes. 2. 3. 4. should be an aduersary to all Godlinesse and exalt himselfe aboue all that is called God? why then should they goe about to bleare your eyes with the wonder of such wordes, more then instruct themselues in the prouidence of God, who hath prouided, and made vs wary of such a generall departing? Why lay they to our charge the cannons, decrees, and decretalls of their Popish fathers, seeing the Lord himselfe pointeth out the Pope as with a finger, and deciphereth him for Anty Christ, as plainely as one man is discouered in the secrets of his body, by the anatomy of another; more then yeeld their owne due subiection to the ordinance and institutions of the GOD? Nay, why should wee (whose eyes and eares the LORD hath opened for the entertainement of his truth) send them away to the viewe of moth-eaten nouelties, and to the sound of such false laromes as these, more then exercise them in their seuerall duties and offices? If they wil not confesse that these and such other testimonies of Gods holy word doe reproue their man of Rome, together with them being his vncircumcised

cised generation of Antichristianity, let vs then apply them: The man of sinne, (saith the Apostle) exalteth him-selfe aboue all that is called GOD, vaunting him-selfe insolently in the Temple of GOD; if (I say) they will not confesse this of their Pope, let them shew vs what regard of obedience hee hath reserued to GOD-ward, in making his booke, (I meane the holy Bible) the vessell of vile estimation, which hee doth not onely bury in oblivion, by his owne dispensations, but in all contempt doth trample and tread it vnder his feete: knowing notwithstanding that it is the word and wisedome of GOD: let them shew vs to what prerogative their Pope hath priced, which proclaimeth himselfe so many degrées aboue Angels: or that denounceth him selfe the spirituall head of the Church of Christ: Hath their Pope performed any couenant of league with the LORD, whose seruants and children hee hath rent from the face of the earth, cancelling the date of their dayes, with more then a thousand butcheries: doth the Pope príde to the omnipotency of GOD, so much as he goeth about to

make himselfe GOD, and is not ashamed to promise all the effects of Gods power, saying that hee both can and may doe all that GOD can doe, to witte, in the pardoning of sinnes, in the saving of soules, in the transmutation of times, in the altering and abrogating of lawes, in the administration of spirituall guifts, to bee short in all other thinges whatsoeuer: nay hee is not thus content, for more expresly dooth hee maintaine his quarrell against GOD; for by certaine necessary consequences he prooueth that hee is aboue the onely God of heauen and earth. O hellish insinuation: how hast thou carried poore ignorant soules to the slauery of this monster, euen in the totall of their deedes and beleefe: what should I article any longer against him whom these few haue condemned to the pit of hell?

But see the pollicy, whereby this subtile serpent hath deluded vs so long: the word of God, which ought to bee the lanthorne to our pathes, hath hee kept back, and ledde the fruite of one whole thousand yeeres in the wildernesse of darkenesse (God knoweth to how great con-

fusion

fusion) and now braggeth in the antiquity of his owne naughtinesse and mischiefe.

Alas: is there any marualle, the world beeing once couered with the spirit of slumber, that it should be ouertaken with the witchcraft of sleepy diseases? Is it any thing strange, that men doe spew at religion, being made drunken with heresie, or is it any wonder (the word of God being once brought into a generall contempt) that the infection of Papistry hath béene so common? giue once the gorge of man with any foule opinion, and he will hardly be purged thereof: make him to beléeue the mortality of the soule, and hee will consent with Protagoras, that there is no God.

They will say that all this winde shaketh no corne, and sweare that wée do belie their Pope and them: truely I cannot blame them, if they would vnfather him of such hatefull blasphemies: but let our selues be charged with the wrong we haue done them herein, and our lines stand vpon the slander, let his owne canonists bée conuinced of all the euill that haue written them, and more then ten

thousand such in exalting of his name; & the Pope himselfe be condemned of madnesse and frenzye, having as like a beast as a bedlame, and as nere the quality of a bedlame, as the quantity of man, consented vnto them, with all pride and presumption.

O good God, how marueilous is it to behold so many wise men so much deceiued, so many gray headed Fathers so childish? so many ignorant accompted wise? and so many Infants allowed for men of graue and ripe iudgement? if they can say against vs, where is the Citie on the Mountaine, the visible Church? the Catholike and vniuersall Churche they are learned enough: but they cannot perceiue that these are fained fires, painted out with faire glosses, wherein is no warmth, nor that they bee Illusions and shaddowes without substance. Take their Church from the pontificall hill: take away their pompe and brauery, or their generall consents, and take away their life: say if this were all, it were well (if euill may bee well) But which is worse, they must haue their Churches beautified with Images, Femi-

mine

minine and masculine, curiously carued, gallantly guilded, prodigally beset with pretious stones, and most delicately adorned with great choyce of Iewelles. They must haue their Rood lofts with flagges and silken banners, with Crosses, Roodes, and Saints, like a stewehouse of superstition. They must haue their braue Altars garnished with petty Gods, with well lifting Prelates, and other holy reliques: they must haue hauen crowned Chaplens, strangely attired, they must haue their Albes, with slike of all coulours, their Pyters and Crossiars, and what should I say, they must haue holy bread, holy water, holy oyle, holy ashes, holy candles, an hundred holy orders, like hypocrites that beautifie out-side, besides a thousand other holy things.

Finally, they may not want any thing that can please the eye, delight the eare or flatter the minde; And lastly, yet doe all these most plainely proue their Church the very Church of Antichrist; for where nothing is wanting that may allure the minde to lust after vanity, or to stirre the heart vnto folly and wickednesse, this

may bee termed (by much better right) a Court for an Atheiſt then a Church for a Chriſtian: for was Jeſus Chriſt ſo high ſet on a hill, that all the world did worſhip him, or outwardly ſo glorious, ſo full of pompe and bravery, that they have drawne from him ſuch an example of imitation? or were there ſo many of his Church (which yet wee doubt not was and is the true Church) that the ſame Church hath lined their mouthes with multitudes, with univerſalities, and vnities generall? Then is this true, Chriſt himſelfe was never borne in an Oxe ſtal, but in the Pallace of ſome Monarch: then was not hee a poore deſpiſed ſoule on the earth, in worſe caſe then foxes and
Mat. 8.20. birds which have holes and nests to ſhield them from the weather, but ſome mighty prince of the world, ruling with all Maieſty and power: and then had Chriſt to imbrace his doctrine, not the Apoſtles and a few other ſilly Diſciples, but the generall conſent of all the Jewiſh Churches. How then came it to paſſe, that hee was put to ſuch a ſhamefull death? was it becauſe hee was well beloued of the multitude? if this be loue, I know not what to

make

make of hatred: but sure I am few will consent so to be beloued.

I would to God the Papist would loke wisely vpon his Church, and afterward tell vs how farre it differeth from the Churches of the Pharisées, which reproueth, and condemneth our Sauiour Christ as a false Prophet, and all his doctrine as new found Doctrine, and schismaticall, saying and sweering that theirs was of antiquity, obserued of their forefathers, and hauing the warrant and consent of the world. What say they at this day against vs which doe imbrace the selfe same Doctrine, that was so condemned? Doe they not say and sweare that Martin Luther is the father of our religion? Doe they not call it a Sect, a Schisme, an Heresie? do they not call vs traytors to God & man, giuing vs such titles as they themselues deserue, and haue they not slaine whole thousands in that quarrell? If we demand of them, whether the Church of God were at any time comparable to the Synagogue of Iewes in respect of the multitude, which way will they turne them? if they answer that it was not, they condemne their owne reasons

sons of very much weaknes, which do go about to confirme the authority of their Church by other marks then the Church of God euer had; If they answer that the Church of Christ was alwaies the greatest, they are already convicted of as great folishnesse, for thereupon would all this packet of vntruth iustly depend. viz.

That the Church of God, was drowned in the generall ouerflowing, when all the world was drownd, and the Church of Satan saued in the Arke. That the Church of God perished among the Sodomites, and iust Lot, and his family, were the Church of the Deuill: that the Iewes, Scribes and Pharisars, were the Church of Christ, and Christ himselfe with the remnant of beleeuers, the Church of Antichrist: In conclusion, that their Church is now the true Church because of the multitude, & ours the false. We will demand but one thing of those multitude of men, which if they truly tell vs and proue, they shall haue our hand and our heart, we wil become as true to them as Keele, and consent to any Religion of their fore-fathers; which is, that they shew forth, at what time the state of the world was

was in so good case, that the best things did please the greatest number, or when iniquity had not the most consent of adherents (except at that time, when all were drownd except eight persons:) Alas their prose is euen as far to seeke, as heauen is distant from hell; God grant therefore the condition of consent be no nearer vnto vs

For it is written, Broad is the way that leadeth to perdition, & many walke therein; but narrow is the path to saluation, straight is the gate, and few doe enter thereat. Rō.10.16. Mat.7.14.

And further, though the children of Israell were as the sand of the sea, yet shall but a remnant bee saued: This is yet more plainly verified by Elias the Prophet, who saw not one man free from idolatry, and the subiection of Belial, besides himselfe, in all the world; yet did hee willingly (all regard of the multitude laid apart,) serue the Lord of Heauen truly. Rom.9.27. Rō. 11.3.

Wherefore, though our fore-fathers, serued those gods on the further side of the flood, or the god of the Amorites, or the gods of their owne hands: Let it amaze vs no more then it did good Iosua Ios.24.12. Iud.8.19. Ier.11.10. 2 Tim.3. 16.

who

who said (and let vs also say with him) We and our houses will serue the GOD of heauen. And with Iudith, We will not follow the sins of our forefathers which forsake their God, and worshipped strange Gods.

The holy Prophets receiued from the mouth or secret inspiration of God all that doctrine that they deliuer or taught: the Apostles proued their doctrine out of Prophets: the godly of ensuing ages haue rested vpon them, And shall we alone be carelesse, or account it enough, if many men haue gone before vs contrary to the Prophets and Apostles? No, no, all men haue sinned from the first (except one) and shall doe to the last, yet it is nothing lawfull for vs to follow their steps therein: Therefore although our forefathers were Idolaters, yet must we learne to serue the Lord, and that we may the better performe our duties in that behalfe, it behoueth vs to be wise in the trying of spirits, least we become clyents to our forefathers superstitions, or superstitious in our owne fancies, and so ignorantly neglect the precepts of our God.

Let

Let vs therefore loke vpon the inuentions of Popery, that we may be able to reprehend the Church of Rome, but let vs call home their Generall Councels, with the rabble of their decretals to the same Prophets and Apostles, and we shall anon perceiue that we haue no cause to feare (their times out of minde) knowing that an euill custome is no better than a common pestilence, which by how much the more is old and ancient, by so much the more it is rotten and stinking: nor yet their common consent, seeing the state of Gods childrē is oftentimes to be desolate. And because there is no heresie but will challenge some maintenance out of Gods word, saying, that their Church is the Church Apostolicall, which the Papist as boldly sweareth and taketh vpon him, as if nothing were god but his Masse: let them shew vs the Prophets and Apostles for their Masses, Dirges, Trentals, praying to Saints, praying with beads, praying to help soules out of Purgatory, worshipping of Idols, Bishopping of baptized children: and of Pares, Creeping to Crosses, hallowing of bells, coniuring of water, coniuring of balme, coniuring

ioring herbes, buying of bulles and pardons, and auricular confession, & the rest of their sacraments, paying of vaine vowes, going on pilgrimage, pace-egs, maniples, licking of rotten bones, Aue Maries, blessing with two fingers, anointing, annopling, absoluing, kneeling, knocking, whipping, crouching, kissing, crossing, chaning, greasing, and ten thousand such trinckets moe. I appeale to the iudgement of the wise hearted, whether God abrogating the ceremonies of his owne law, did purpose, that the Pope should institute and erect a new of such traditions as these.

If wee hold them hard to the proofe of these and such other by the touch-stone, aforesaid (namely the word of GOD) their nert leape, is longer than the passage betweene Douer and Callice: for they crosse the broad Seas to vnwritten verities. But how cold their entertainment is there, wee would not much feare to make themselues the Iudges, if shame and grace had not forsaken them. Indeed we know and confesse that more was spoken, than is written: And that whatsoeuer Christ and the Apostles preached,

thed, was the word of GOD, were it written or not: But we know also that if more had beene necessary to salnation than is written, GOD would not suffer vs to want it, least with them we might happen to runne a whoring after our owne deuises: But aboue all, we are most assured that the Spirit of God neuer was, nor will be contrary to it selfe: Therefore let vs try how truly their verities vnwritten doe accord with the written word.

We finde in the Scripture, that wée ought to worship God alone, and not to make our selues any grauen Image; but is it possible that the Word vnwritten should tollerate their prayers to Saints? their sacrificing to Idols, and their falling downe before blocks? In this word written, it is called the doctrine of Diuels to forbid matrimony to any man, and can it be his word vnwritten that Ministers shall neuer marry? It is his Word written that all that depart this world in the LORD, doe rest from their labours: and is it also in the word vnwritten, that they be purged of many torments in the fire of Purgatorie before they

True

they doe reſt? It is plaine by the word written, that we haue no remiſſion of ſinne but in the blood of Chriſt, without whom we are dead and condemned to the bottome of hell: but is it as plaine by his word vnwritten, that the Pope can ſaue? that whoſoeuer ſhall die in a white Friers ſcapular ſhall be ſaued? or he that dieth in a grey Friers frocke, ſhall neither come in Purgatory nor in hell? and aboue all, is it his word vnwritten, that a man may get in ſtore a heape of deſeruings (called workes of ſupererogation) to ſaue himſelfe and his friends, with broad blaſphemy againſt the heauens?

Is not this prepoſterous geare? who would thinke that theſe men, ſtanding ſo much vpon the ſlippers of their wiſdome and gray heads, would thus fouly ouerſhot themſelues? which ſo farre forth as in them lieth, doe make God a contemptible changling: Religion more vncertaine then the Lesbian rule, and tie themſelues to the continuall ſlauery of their owne deuices, and their Maſter the man of Rome, and yéelding their whole contemplation to the worke of darkneſſe.

Maſſe

Alasse, with what blinde spirit are these poore soules vexed, that will haue their Pope and the Church of Rome againe exalted, that take away the plaine Doctrine of faith, & iustification in Christ: and teach a faith moulded vp in an idle fancy: saying: that wee must beleeue of Christ as their Church beleeueth, because their Church beleeueth as they beléeue: But if we demaund what they, or their Church doe beleeue, the next way for vs to know, is euen to goe loke: for doubtlesse they know not, neither can they tell vs.

Truely, howsoeuer they colour the matter with demont countenance, or courragious braggs, with perswasion of the time past, or the scarcity, or iniquity of the time present, or with the outward face or visor of their charity, their estate is lamentable; it fareth with them euen as with butchers, that vse to blow vp their flesh that it may séeme bigger: they are grubling so much in the mire of their owne desert to the world-ward, that they forget and neglect all that true religion and seruice they owe vnto God.

For note this well, there is that Papist in all the world, that will not sooner

bid vs behould his charity towards his neighbour, than his integrity to the worshipping of God: So that charity being the vnder-seruant to religion, and a second thing required, they make it the high stone of the corner, and the foundation whereupon they build all their righteousnes vnto saluation: Truely we dare not deny that in respect of the worke (were it not depraued) the Papist, hath som good matter in him because his deeds doe often times extend to the benefit of GODS Church: And euen in this (I write in the griefe of my conscience, wherein I call the Lord to witnesse) that they condemne many professors in the day of visitatiō, that are wide speakers, and lewd liuers altogither: yet I say alwaies that in this his only point, it fareth with him, as with the Cow hauing giuen a iolly messe of Milke, that afterward doth spill it with her foote.

For loe, they beare vs in hand that they haue many good workes, and that they are continuall workers, not because they are so commanded of God, but rather because, thereby they will worke out their saluation and purchase heauen.

Alass

Masse it is a crauen Cocke that crow-eth no where but vpon his owne dunghil. We know that all the good workes of the world, being done without loue, are no-thing worth, and that their supererroga-tions being examined, and their grea-test workes of dignitie next vnto them, are found without loue, mercie, pitie or compassion. But if it may bee accoumpt-ed a deede of mercie, to giue rich Altar-cloathes, to the beautifying of Altars, a deed of loue, to build Chappells and Chauntries, and a deed of pitty to goe far on knees, to giue great gifts to shrines; then are they passing full of loue, mercy, pitty and compassion: otherwise they haue none at all, at least that is accepta-ble. For they pitty the pouerty of lime and stones, and them they cloath.

They pitty a sort of foule fat Priests in furred gownes, and them they decke with golden Copes, and supply in all other their vanities and idlenesse, as if it were a good deed to grease a fat hog in the tayle: But where is the loue, and compassion of their poore brother all this while? I will say no more, let them that fare the better for theis and such o-

ther good workes, praise them: but yet let them beware they sinne not therein. Like vnto these are their Idols, which executors vse to giue after men bée dead; that liberality is idle, hauing no good intent, and the reward rotten that is paid backe againe, which is, Lord haue mercy on the soule of this charitable dead man. O grosse folly, where is the loue that should make this déede acceptable: if we should speake generally of all their workes, they are euen drosse and more shamefull vices than these, if more may be; for I say, and yet not I, but the holy Ghost, if they be not done in loue, springing out of the bowells of true faith, they stink before the face of God. Yea but they will say, they haue all loue, mercy, pitty & compassiō. Yea but how can this be true: Let it be granted that they giue many gifts to the poore, that they helpe to defend the widdow, to harbor the fatherlesse, to cloath the naked, to féede the hungry, &c. What of all this: they do not these things in compassion of the needy, but to get vnto themselues the vnspeakable benefit of saluation; this is loue indéede I grant: but is it not the onely loue of

themselues:

themselues? For if I lend or giue a man an hundred pounds, because I would gaine a thousand, or a thousand because I would gaine tenne thousand: whom loue I? my poore neighbour hauing need of me? or my selfe? O blindnesse, that seeth not these euills? nay twise O blindnesse that doth not see more than this. What is to say that wee are able to saue and iustifie our selues before the tribunall seate of God, but to reprooue our most wise God of folly and doltishnes, in that without need hee sent Iesus Christ his welbeloued Son, by so great torment as he indured, to deliuer vs from the bondage of sinne? And what is it else but to cõtemne the vnspeakable loue of our Sauiour, who being a God so mighty, the King of all kings, & the onely prince of all worlds, disdained not to take vpon him the contemptible shape of a seruant, and to beare the burthen of all our sins, euen vnto the death of the vile and shamefull Crosse, that hee might present vs blamelesse before his Father? Which grosse opinion, so outragiously blasphemous, some Papists at this day, waxing halfe ashamed of, and daring not so broadly to

maintaine, will seeme to qualifie with a poore shift of desert. And because very Infants or fooles in this light of the Gospell (for which the Lord bee praised) might otherwise point at them for their folly, they are content not to deprive Christ of his dignity altogether, and therefore doe attribute some part of iustification to him, & the rest to themselues. Surely this is scarcely so good a recompence, as hauing cracked his crowne, to giue him a plaister: for except some insufficiency were or might iustly bee found in him, what madnesse would moone them to intrude themselues into his office? But if these enter-cõmoners with Christ, though they seeme to haue retained a certaine blinde modesty, be heedfully examined, in truth they do but practise to delude themselues and vs, hauing no minde to deale with Christ, hot or cold.

For if wee demand of them for Gods eternall predestination, whereby he bringeth the elected and reprobate sort to their appointed ends, they are at defiance with that doctrine: and euen in this haue they taken away all that part of iustification, that they ascribed to Christ before: for why-

why? If wée be not safe conducted to heauen by the Predestination of God in Iesus Christ, it followeth that wee are carried thither by some desert of our owne, or else that we neuer come there at all. It were a strong Engine that should hale them from this opinion, and yet is Christ heereby made altogether Iacke out of office. Let vs not wonder at these men, so much as pray for them: let vs not quarrel so much with them, as perswade with them; nor laugh so much at their folly and wickednes, as lament their ignorance: for this is true, if they be right, we be wrong; if we be wrong, wée are already sold vnder sinne: contrariwise if wée bée right, (whereof let vs not doubt, because the spirit of truth hath sealed vs vp in the Prophets and Apostles) then are they wrong; there is nothing more certaine than their iust damnation, vnlesse they turn to God with hearty repentance (which God for his Sons sake euen speedily grant them, if it bee his will.)

And although they are not ashamed to denounce against vs that we are Libertines and despisers of good workes, because wée preferre our faith in frée iustifi-

cation: be it as far from vs to be troubled at those false suggestions, as we are free of that fault: we know and confesse that Gods dearest children haue small feeling of God without righteous doing: therefore we professe, that if we see no good workes in our hands, if we perceiue not that the preaching of the Gospell hath mortified in vs our concupiscence, & made vs to hunger and thirst after righteousnesse, we haue small testimony of Gods election; we may walke till we are weary of our hope, and faith in Christ, we may prattle till we are hoarse of the Gospell and our profession, and we may defie the Pope and his accomplices to the bottome of hell. But except our selues loue the righteousnesse of God, and we exercise the same, Satan doth feed vs forth with the strength of illusion: for godlinesse is not made of talke, as bowes are of leaues, nor as woods are of trées, but it is such an holinesse as doth climbe vp from vice to vertue, and from one vertue to another, without ceasing.

God sir, this being true, we haue need to looke about vs and euery man haue an especiall eie to Gods glory in the execu-

tion

tion of our actions: and if we haue attained to some knowledge in the schole of Christ, we see in the Gospell, that he is condemned, that hideth his talent, as well as the other that riotously wasted it. I pray you apply this to your selfe, whom the Lord hath loued with long continuance of his goodnesse, and you shall finde out a right Christian exploit euen in the man that sate next at your elbow: Set vpon it, or if you haue begun giue it not ouer, for the winning of one soule to Christ is more acceptable in the sight of God, than to offer the whole world for a sacrifice; what though he be a man, the Spirit of God is able to encounter him, if he be neuer so wily or peruerse in opinion: God who is able to rend the heart, & to pierce the marrow in the bones, is alwaies present in his owne worke.

What though hee haply may command your silence: your spirit must bee touched with his sinnes, you may not suffer him to rest in vncleannesse: for they that are of Christ are alwaies carefull to bring others to Christ-ward, but especially those that are so neare vnto them, as he is to you. You know that in processe

of

of time, the ſoft dros of raine doth breake the hard flint, the filly worme doth throw downe the mighty Oake, and the ſlow ſnaile doth attaine to the top of Mountaines. Therefore let nothing diſcourage you.

If this opinion bée eſtabliſhed vpon the preſcriptions of his forefathers, trye him by the Prophets and Apoſtles; if the length and continuance of his religion doth yet ſéeme forcible to perſwade him, ſhew him the law, where God puniſhed that tranſgreſſion of Iſrael with foure-hundred yéers blindneſſe; and no doubt he that would puniſh the tranſgreſſion of that Law hee gaue by Angells, with ſo long ignorance, may as iuſtly perſwade him, that the ſame God can puniſh the contempt of his Goſpell, with a thouſand yeares blindneſſe; nay proue vnto him (I ſay) the generall Apoſtacy whereof the Apoſtles haue told vs. If he dare not ſubſcribe to the Goſpell, becauſe he may become an offence to his friends, proue from thence, that he feareth his worldly friends, more than he loueth his heauenly God: if he ſhun the Goſpell becauſe of thoſe hereſies, that daily ſpring vp in the light

light thereof, shew him ẏ he neuer knew, or else hath forgotten the Scripture, which doth witnesse: The Heresies must needs be that the faithful may be tried. If his eyes be prefixed vpon professors, that hee can finde many faults in their manners, let him looke back into himselfe, & he shall see the Papists and Protestants are very men, needing the Phisition: But if he find not so great corruptiõ in himselfe; First let him take heede least it fare with him as with men that bee sicke, which when they thinke themselues recouered and nearest to health, are euen then furthest from health and nearest their end. But if there be not indeede such corruption in them (which is hard to be determined on their side, considering how partiall our nature is in it own behalfe, & readie to flatter it selfe) let him neuer impute this to the dignity of his religion, but to the goodnesse of God the giuer of all good things. If he feare the Gospell because it is ill spoken of: Let him remember that Christ himselfe is a stumbling stone made for the fall of many: if he be afraid of corrupt translations, let him correct & shew vs the cause of this misliking, & he shal be satisfied. 1. Cor. 11. 19. Luk. 2. 34.

satisfied. Finally if he shall stumble at the iars ỳ are now adates among Diuines, let him without partialitie reade the monuments of Popery, and he shal perceiue ten times more ods among the Doctors thereof: For there is none of them all (and almost as few of the old fathers) but are so far wide one from another, yea and most of them from themselues, that neither Papists, nor Protestants doe want matter thereof to authorise and maintain their religion; nor any heretick that hath bin since the first beginning of Papistry. Therefore you may proue vnto him, that this fault ought not to be fathered on the word of God, which doth plainly, and truly set forth all points of religion, but rather vpon Sathan and his malice, whose continuall practise hath bẽ, by all meanes and deuices possible, to discredit the religion of God: for such Darnell did he throw among the Apostles, as did set great dissention betweene Paul and Barnabas, and likewise made Paul and Peter at open defiance.

All these things I leaue to your continuall meditation, and by you, to be imployed to the benefit of Gods Church, as your

your duty and occasion shall require: And so beseeching you not to neglect any other that by your godly study you can call to remembrance, whereby Gods truth may be maintained, I doe humbly take my leaue.

FINIS.